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**THE LADY
FROM L.U.S.T. #7**

Kiss My Assassin

by Rod Gray



With most spies, a kiss is
just a kiss— but with
Eve Drum, it's a deadly weapon

EVE DRUM MEETS THE IRON MAIDEN

Hands shoved me into the hall, guided me down a dark staircase to the cellar. A door opened, a wall switch clicked, and a blue radiance sprang to life all around me.

I gasped in terror.

I was in a medieval torture chamber!

No, it was worse than that — it was a medieval torture chamber with all modern improvements!

Blue light bulbs cleverly hidden behind glass panels shaped like human bones were a touch of genius. They added a grisly horror to the sight of the chains and manacles hanging from the stone walls, to the iron maiden, the rack and the wedge.

My girl-girl flesh was covered with goose-bumps. I wanted to scream and scream.

Marcello Laureano, my evil host, greeted me with an ironic bow as I entered. Then he addressed himself to the two Neanderthal types who were holding me.

"I don't want her disfigured," he said, "not just yet. You can have your fun with her later. . ."

KISS MY ASSASSIN

By Rod Gray

an espionage novel

A TOWER BOOK

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KISS MY ASSASSIN

PROLOGUE

Enzo Carrara was a hired killer.

He was here at the Madden villa pool in a black minimum that showed his lean, muscular body just about stark naked. Only the black *cache-sex* hid anything of him from the eyes of the somewhat fleshy Italian woman who lounged in a scant bikini at his side, lazily caressing his inner thigh.

Enzo Carrara was not going to kill the blonde woman. His victim was the far more attractive owner of the villa where he was a poolside guest. As he responded to the gentle strokings of the ringed hand between his thighs, the young Italian ran his eyes up the shapely legs of Penelope Madden.

He did not relish this job. He would much rather make love to Penny Madden than kill her. Enzo liked to make love. He was young, his blood was hot, his male apparatus was always insistent that its demands be fed. Even now, searching out the secrets of one woman under her scant bikini with his black eyes, his flesh was reacting to the caresses of the other.

"Nunzi tocca, cara mia," he breathed, squirming.

The blonde wriggled closer, putting her red mouth to

his ear. "But I love to touch you, Enzo. You're such an animal. You make me feel all hungry."

"Later, later," he whispered, studying Penny Madden as she shifted on her beach chair. *Santa Maria benedetta!* Those soft thighs, so tanned, so kissable! Enzo knew ways of driving her out of her skull. He wondered what might happen if he went to Miss Madden, who owned this fine villa, and told her about the five million lira he had been given to kill her.

Her big white breasts shifted under the bikini halter as she moved restlessly. Enzo Carrara liked big breasts on a woman. The blonde beside him had generous globes. They shifted and jiggled the way Penny Madden's breasts did. They were what had first attracted him to signora Tea Crescenzi.

The sun was warm on his chest and belly, as he settled back into the double lounge chair more comfortably. He wanted time to think about killing Penny Madden. His heavy lips smiled the secret thoughts. He would have liked to diddle her to death, but this could not be. It must be a professional job with no betraying clues left behind, no possible way to trace the murder to him. An alibi would be very handy to have, come to think of it.

The blonde signora—she was the wife of an Italian banker in his fifties—leaned over to touch him gently on the sizable bulge at his *cache-sexe*. Enzo squirmed. If he made hot love to this errant wife, she could be his alibi. Her room, when she was present at the Madden villa, was always next door to the suite occupied by Miss Madden herself.

He did not discourage the groping hand. He had been chary with his favors of late where the blonde signora was concerned. Perhaps he would make up for that, tonight.

His hand brushed lazily across a soft breast, pressing

gently. He heard the indrawn breath, the all but inaudible moan. Enzo let his lips twist in amusement. These wives were so easy to play up to. They were always sensation starved, and he knew many ways to give them the thrills they sought so desperately.

"Come, *bellissima*," he breathed. "Into the pool."

She came off the lounge with a swing of handsome legs and a jouncing of heavy breasts. Enzo studied her fleshy body. She was an exciting woman, no doubt of it. In her late thirties, with a spill of glossy black hair showing a thread of grey here and there, she was far more appealing than a lot of women Enzo Carrara had batted on these past few years.

As she came to her feet, he moved swiftly to stand behind her, nudging her soft buttocks with his swollen manhood. Signora Crescenzi gurgled and turned a smiling face to him. He wanted to excite her, to get her dancing with desire. She must be absolutely on fire when he took her to bed a little later.

They dove into the pool and swam its length, stroking slowly. The villa was set on a rocky promontory, looking out over the bay that flanks the Baiae waterfront. It was a masterpiece of Italian architecture and gardening. Its hexagonal-shaped pool was planted in a lawn covering two acres. Between the lawn and the house was a small forest of yew trees and red azalea bushes. Statues and marble benches gave it an old Roman Empire look.

A rock garden fronted the pool to the north, part of the wide walk between the house patio and the rim of the big pool. Lilacs were flourishing there. It was late spring in southern Italy, and the fragrance was divine. Sniffing at it, Enzo Carrara decided the perfume and the flesh smell of Tea Crescenzi were too much to resist.

He put his hand on her back and ran his palm down to

her almost naked hip. She shivered, pressing her thigh against his arousal.

Nobody paid them any attention. A visitor, Hernando Barras, was running his lips up and down the bare arm of the lovely Argentine woman, Veronica Ozaca. Beside them, the rich industrialist from Milan, Francesco Dolamente, was openly caressing his redheaded friend, Anna Tolentina, between her soft, plump thighs. So it was with no sense of putting on an exhibition that Enzo let his fingers slip under the bikini panties the signora wore to fondle her fleshy buttocks.

She was equally shameless. Her hand sought him, squeezed and fondled him shamelessly, her action openly revealed by the clear pool water. She turned her body; she pressed her breasts to his chest and her belly to his distention.

"Later, *caro mio*. Hmmm? You must not deny me. My flesh is in heat. We will spend the night upstairs. Hmmm?"

"I also burn for you, sweet woman. Ah, but you know that. Your hand is a fire that matches the flame in my blood."

"Enzo, if you only knew the way I feel!"

Enzo knew. A lot of women had told him, quite honestly and in great erotic detail, the way he made them feel. Why should the Signora Crescenzi be an exception? To convince her he understood what she was suffering, he slid his hand lower.

The older woman hunched her loins, panting.

His fingers caressed her gently. No need to rush her along. He wanted her at fever heat this night. She must peak and peak again, until she collapsed in his arms. Then she would be able to swear in a law court—if it ever

came to that—that he had been in her embrace all night long. And most important of all, he had never left it.

Enzo Carrara almost felt gratitude to the signora. His lips trailed kisses across her soft throat and up behind her ear. His mouth caught her earlobe and sucked on it, while he went on pushing his rigid manhood into her lower belly.

While he did this, he stared at Penny Madden and thought of the waste of womanflesh her murder would entail. He never argued with his employers, however. If they wanted Penny Madden dead, he would kill her. Five million lire—about eight thousand American dollars—was a fortune to Enzo Carrara.

Already, he had killed five times for his various employers. In the eyes of his contemporaries, he was adjudged a rich man. Not that he acted like a rich man. He put his money in the bank and lived on the generosity of women like Signora Crescenzi, rich women who showered him with gifts in exchange for the gift of his healthy young male passion.

It was an exchange that delighted the amoral Enzo Carrara.

Penny Madden was standing, waving a hand.

"The patio, everybody," she called. "*Prosciutto* and melon, sausages and mushrooms, *pepperoncini*, potato *gnocchi*—and lots of other tasties."

The signora loved food as much as she did *flon-flon*. Enzo aided her from the pool with his hands spread on her buttocks where they oozed whitely from her bikini pants, pausing to bend and place a love bite on one plump hillock. She squealed in delight.

Enzo enjoyed the Madden antipasto. It was always fresh, spiced to a nicety. He avoided the more fattening *osso buco* and the potato *gnocchis*. He enjoyed his healthy

body and strengthened it with a series of weight-lifting exercises and some daily swimming. He kept it lean and muscular. He had learned early that rich women preferred a body such as his to view naked, to handle freely as their whims dictated.

As he and the signora ate, seated at a glass-topped patio table, he studied some of his companion guests. There was: Lorenzo di Cerci, fat and amiable, interested in the Lolitas, who came to add their almost childish actions to the merriments; dour Henri Hairot, a French designer who liked to escape his Parisian image with a week or two in Rome and who enjoyed the more opulent bodies of the Roman ladies after a long diet of match-stick-thin French models.

He grinned, watching Francesco Biletti wolf down Genovese salami and slices of provolone cheese. He knew little about Biletti, except that he seemed to be very rich; but they were all rich, these men, rich and powerful. I made him feel like one of them when he rubbed elbows with such a man as Hernando Barras, the Spanish ship mogul. Barras was one of the regulars. He flew over from Madrid in his own plane, at least every month, for a few days.

Penny was at his elbow. "Having fun?" she asked, smiling at the signora. Penny was a good skate; she was more than generous with the use of her pool and the many bedrooms of her villa. She furnished food to everybody without question. All she demanded was that you enjoy yourself.

Enzo nodded, putting his arm about Tea Crescenzi's bare middle and drawing her against him. "The signora and I are going to stay over, Penny, if it isn't too much trouble?"

"You kidding? It's good to have you."

Enzo Carrara thought about the Italian Beretta in his car. There was a silencer in the glove compartment too that fitted the Beretta barrel perfectly. The gun made only a little *pupft* when he used it. He never had to shoot twice: he was a good marksman.

He must get the Beretta and its silencer before he went upstairs with the signora. He owned a Dopp kit of tooled leather, especially made to hold the gun and the silencer. It had cost a lot of money, but it was a tool of his trade like the revolver; and where his business was concerned, Enzo was not a stingy man.

His palm was sliding down the naked side of the woman with him, enjoying its soft smoothness. The thought of a killing always roused his sex instincts, the way the old Roman gladiators had been roused by killing in the arena, so that they were impatient to take on the Roman matrons, waiting for them at the stage door of the Circus Maximus, back in Nero's time.

Enzo Carrara liked to think of himself as a modern-day gladiator. The fact that he bedded his matron before the slaying did not alter his image in his own mind.

The wind off the bay came across the villa estate, cool and soothing after the warm day. The signora shivered, and Enzo became very solicitious.

"Let me get you a wrap, darling," he murmured.

At her nod he patted her nearly naked buttocks and eased away from the guests. This was the opportunity he needed to get his Dopp kit. It would take less than three minutes to go along the walk to the front of the villa, open his car, unlock the glove compartment and lift out the leather bag. Add another three minutes for the wrap she wanted. He would be back inside six minutes. Scarcely time for anyone to notice he was gone.

He made it in five minutes and seven seconds. The

signora had not moved from her seat at the glass-topped table. She gave him a radiant smile, as he slipped the Pucci wrap about her naked shoulders after first planting a kiss on her soft throat.

Dusk was draping the lawn and the guest house beyond the pool in a purple mantle. The wind off the bay was growing cooler by the moment. Enzo was taking liberties under the wrap; his hand was inside the bikini pants, gently fondling, as the signora whimpered and writhed.

It was Hernando Barras who yawned and muttered, "It's been a long day. I'm for bed. Anybody else?"

The slim platinum blonde he had been squeezing nodded her patrician head. Her pale cheeks were flushed; Enzo knew Barras had aroused her female instincts.

"I might as well come along too," she breathed, lifting her beach bag.

Enzo Carrara gave a little jerk with his curly black hair, as he stared at the signora. She smiled, nodding, and rose to her feet.

Some of the guests moved down the flagstoned path toward the guest house. Others turned in at the patio French doors. Signora Crescenzi walked ahead of Enzo Carrara, pallid buttocks rolling with each step, maintaining his interest in her feminine charms.

He needed no such encouragement, though he feasted his eyes on the white globes, observing their gelatinous shake. The mere thought that he was going to kill tonight was enough to make him rabid for a sex session with this older woman.

As she moved ahead of him up the wide marble staircase, he studied her handsome legs. This would not be the first time he had bedded Tea Crescenzi, but it would be the best.

He would begin by making her believe she was his

raison d'être, his sole reason for existing. All these older women liked to feel they were providing a young man with something no other girl could give him. It made them feel sexier, he supposed; they became younger, knowing their female attractiveness had not deserted them.

And so, as the door of her suite closed behind them, Enzo fell to his knees behind signora Crescenzi, bending his head to kiss her soft, perfumed thighs. She was startled. He had never before approached her in such a cavalier manner.

"Enzo, darling—what are you doing?"

"Trying to tell you how much you mean to me, *madonna mia!* I have never before let myself go in this manner. Please! Tell me you understand!"

Since he was kissing the backs of her thighs, brushing his lips along the soft underslopes of her buttocks, running his mouth down to her calves, she found it difficult to talk. She did not want to interrupt this body worship he was displaying. She merely moaned and wriggled, as the thrills ran from her legs up into her groin.

Now he was turning her, kissing the sides of her handsome legs, panting like a schoolboy overwhelmed by his first love. Tea Crescenzi was no fool. Though she knew her body was as attractive as those of most women her age, she was aware that as handsome a youth so Enzo Crrara could get younger and more beautiful women merely for the taking.

Did he prefer an older woman? Some young men did, because the older woman was a mother image, she who furnishes security to the young male, relieving him of all responsibility and of the need to make any decisions for himself. It was the flaw in the character of the youth, the

innate weakness in his makeup that gave her this grip on his emotions.

The Oedipus complex has its examples in history, even aside from Oedipus and Jocasta. It was the scandal of Rome that Nero rode in the same palanquin as his mother, Agrippina, and that she let him make love to her while both of them swayed to the strides of the slaves who carried them. No man knows the excesses they committed in private. Josephine was older than Napoleon, who had already demonstrated his own Oedipus complex by carrying on with a number of older women; he even proposed to one who was twenty years his senior.

But why go into causes and explanations? Those educated lips were making her weak at the knees; they were lifting a scream from deep in her throat. She could take no more of this! She tried with her ringed hands to catch his face, to lift it from the nesting spot it had found between her upper thighs.

Her bikini pants were torn—lying a few feet away, where he had thrown them after ripping them loose—but she cared nothing about that. She could buy a thousand bikinis. What he was doing to her, kneeling there, was something she had felt only twice before in her life.

“Enzo, Enzo!” she sobbed, hips jerking and rotating to his lingual worship. “You’ve never been like this!”

“Don’t you like it? Do you mind? Please, *mamma mia*—say you enjoy it!”

His voice was an erotic invitation to this woman, rapidly losing her senses before his caresses. She could not think; she could only feel, and what she was feeling deprived her of her reason.

Her ringed hands tangled in his curly black hair, holding his face where it was. “*Dio mio—sì! Sì!* I love it, I love it. I never thought that you . . .”

"You drive me mad, my darling Tea. Can you understand it? You are everything I have ever dreamed of in a woman. I have never dared reveal my true feelings before. I was afraid!"

"Afraid?" she whispered.

"Afraid you'd think me a fool!"

"Enzo . . . how can you say such a thing? I love you, dearest! You are my whole life to me. But you—you must wait—a bath . . ."

"No," he panted, clinging to her naked hips with both arms, rubbing his face back and forth against her femininity. "No scents, no perfumes—not this time. I want you as you are—with the sweat dried on you, with the taste of your skin and its suntan all salty."

"Oh, my darling . . . my darling!" she whispered.

His hands were tearing her halter from her mature breasts. The dark brown nipples were so swollen they hurt, but as she bent over him and his lips caught and tugged, she gave a little cry and felt the pain slide into ecstasy. Her naked hips were rocking back and forth; she could not help it. It was a bodily reflex action, like an eyelid blinking.

"I want you, darling," she panted. "*Dio mio*—take me. Take me!" Her hands reached down, tried to pull him toward the bed.

To her amazement, he began pleading with her. "Please, please, Tea! Don't torture me. I want you so bad, it's killing me. I ache, I ache!"

"But I want you too, darling, and . . . oh my God, yes! It must hurt you. You do want me badly, don't you, dear?"

She was completely unaware that he was playing a game with her. His feverish voice was calculatedly rousing every female instinct in her; that of woman, of

mother, of whore. She knew she was responding to him in a manner in which she had never responded to any man, ever. She wanted to turn herself inside out to pleasure him.

So now she begged him, pleading with him to take her, throwing herself on her back on the bed, spreading wide her thighs. No longer was she the wife of Salvatore Crescenzi, the rich Italian banker. She was the female essence roused to its peak by the attentions of this handsome male.

Enzo Carrara had her under a sensuous spell in which she would believe anything he told her. He could take her, whisper into her ear, almost hypnotizing her into believing everything he said.

His body slipped from its *cache-sexe*. He flung himself upon her, taking her this first time as the bull takes the cow, the stallion the mare. Time enough later for those nuances he enjoyed and in which Tea Crescenzi especially delighted. He was too keyed up to wait, as was the woman.

His passion was so great that even as he joined himself with her fleshy body, he had to force his mind away from this erotic extravaganza. Think of Penny Madden, next door. Think of fitting the silencer to the Beretta! Think of pumping a bullet into the tanned body of the American woman . . .

No! Do not think of that! It is too exciting. Think—or try to think, with soft arms holding you, with fleshy legs wrapped about your middle—of . . . of. . . .

He shrieked like an animal in pain.

The woman screamed in his ear, thickly, mouth open.

Their bodies rolled across the bedcovers, bucking wildly. He was sinking his teeth into her plump shoulder,

biting hard, adding pain to the spasmodic ecstasy of her convulsions.

The ormolu clock on the mantel chimed ten.

At ten minutes past one, Enzo Carrara slid off the bed. His eyes fastened on the naked body of the woman he had been making love to for the past three and a half hours. She lay in a carnal `coma. She was whispering what he had made her say until it had become an automatic chant, as he drove her to one orgasm after the other.

"... all night long. In my arms in the bed, all night long. He was in my arms. We made love for almost eight solid hours ..."

The young man nodded, satisfied. It was like hypnosis, all right. Or the way they could teach you lessons while you slept with records or tape recordings droning the lesson into your ears as you slumber, so that you got the message whether you wanted to or not.

Tea Crescenzi would believe the things he had whispered to her as she dozed. Nobody in the whole wide world would ever be able to convince her that he had not been with her every moment of the night. Even under a lie detector test, she would be able to testify to that, and think she was telling the truth.

Enzo congratulated himself on his cleverness.

He turned and reached for the Dopp kit. Unzipping it, he brought out the Beretta, the silencer. He screwed the silencer on with practiced deftness. The gun made a good, solid weight in his hands.

His hand turned the doorknob, slowly.

The hall was empty. He tiptoed along the carpeting, paused at the door of the room Penny Madden occupied.

He reached out toward the silver doorknob. It turned silently.

The room into which he stepped was dimly lighted by the radiance coming from the open bathroom door; he could hear splashing shower waters. He waited there, the gun a solid weight in his hand, imagining how she might look. He took a step closer, and the cascading waters stopped.

She was emerging from the shower, lifting the curtain. In the bathroom mirror set beside the washstand, Enzo Carrera could see it all. His breath caught in his throat. She was lovely.

First, he saw her slim, tanned legs, then her hips, and as she stepped completely out of the shower, he found her untanned breasts gently swinging to her movements.

His sigh was almost loud in the night silence.

Penny Madden did not hear him. She was poised before the upright mirror, smiling at her reflection. Well, she won't have to worry about getting old, Enzo thought, raising the Beretta. She won't age another minute.

He squeezed the trigger.

A small black hole appeared, right between her breasts. A heart hit, he reflected exultantly. Death was instantaneous. He stared a moment at the naked body crumpled on the bathroom floor tiles, then sighed and shook his head in faint regret.

Within seconds, he was back in bed with Tea Crescenzi. She murmured, turned slightly, her arms lifting to enclose him. Enzo snuggled his head on her plump shoulder. She would make a perfect witness. She would swear until hell froze over that he had not left her side all night long.

Enzo Carrara slept like a baby.

Chapter 1

David Anderjanian held out the check.

Idly, I glanced at it. It was made out in my name, and the sum indented into its sum line was . . .

I sat up straighter. I squealed, "For me?"

The check was for one million dollars.

My case officer grinned. When David Anderjanian grins at me, I know it means trouble. But everybody should have such troubles, because he was assuring me it was all mine.

"You have to spend it, though. No hoarding it. L.U.S.T. will demand a strict accounting."

I gurgled my pleasure. L.U.S.T. is the League for Underground Spies and Terrorists. It is a byblow of the C.I.A. and the N.S.A. It does things those reputable organizations are not permitted to do: fight flame with fire, kill when it becomes necessary to the national safety, steal when it is ditto.

I am Eve Drum, girl spy for L.U.S.T.

I have killed, stolen, lied my way in and out of dozens of tight spots, ditto beds for good old Uncle Sam. Between jobs, I live high; as a witness my posh apartment in the Sixties here in Little Old New York and the original

Anne Fogarty dress that draped my contours, as I sat on my divan and stared at the million dollar check. I was so excited, I forgot to ask the proper question.

"Don't you want to know why?" David wondered.

"Quite honestly . . . no. A million dollars. All mine! Am I dreaming, David?"

"Not yet. The nightmare doesn't begin for about forty-eight hours. Until then, you have time to live a little."

When this big blond Viking of a lover-boy talks like that, I shiver. David Anderjanian has sent me off on some wild jobs, so that I've grown to accept the fact that he doesn't balk at danger. Danger for me, that is. So when he gets this serious, I begin to worry more than usual.

I sighed. "Okay. What do I do?"

"You own an Italian villa, darling. You're going to throw parties, hold love-ins, buy yourself expensive cars, much jewelry, hire the finest chef in the whole world."

That did it. I threw up my hands. "Get yourself another girl. Not me. When that's the pitch, I run scared."

David laughed. He is six feet, four inches tall and weighs about two-twenty, all bone and muscle. His laugh can be a frightening thing, especially when it is directed at my fate. As his laugh went on, I shrank more and more inside myself. When David became hysterical, I knew I was going to face quite a problem.

"All right, you want the bad part? I'll give it to you," he said, wiping away his tears of laughter. "You've got to find the bastard who murdered our girl in Rome, Penny Madden. Her job was to find three former Nazis—each of whom has come out of hiding recently in a disguise nobody can penetrate."

"Talk about your mission impossibles!"

"Well, not exactly impossible, but damn hard. Even I will admit that. But Eve honey," he murmured, leaning

forward to pat my knee and smile tenderly at me—I tensed when he did that, David Anderjanian is no A. K. artist—“General Moffitt says nobody but you has a chance. That’s the highest compliment our boss has ever paid anybody.”

“You’re breaking me up, David,” I snarled.

“Never mind the comments, just listen,” he soothed, in his official voice. “Somebody got to Penny Madden two nights ago. Put a bullet right between her breasts. She never knew what hit her, poor kid.”

“And I’m her substitute?”

“Right the first time. Penny has been trying to learn the identities of the three ex-Nazis. Without success, as far as I know. In her very few reports she did hint that if anything should happen to her, her name was a clue to the game. What that means, I haven’t the faintest.”

“I’m with you there, chief.”

“Who these three men are, nobody knows. I don’t believe Penny knew, either.”

“What makes them so important?”

“You’ve been reading about the political troubles they’ve been having in West Germany. The Socialist German Student League for one, not necessarily the most dangerous, but certainly the most violent, is an out and out threat to return to the days of the brown shirts, when Hitler and his crew took over the country with violence.

“When publisher Axel Springer protested these young communist activities, the students turned on him, burned his trucks, set fire to his printing houses. It was a return to the days of those-who-disagree-with-us-must-go. Freedom of speech for the commies only, not for their opponents.

“And when the shooting of Rudi Dutschke led to the student riots and the deaths of two men, it was money

from the liberal hands of these three ex-Nazis that helped pay the bills arising from those riots. Smear tactics, burn and batter techniques, these are the old methods that are coming out of oblivion today.

"That's why these three men are dangerous," David said quietly. "They are ghosts come back to life, ghosts that must be laid to rest before they go too far."

In politics, the fast growth of the neo-Nazis, the National Democratic Party, is credited with being, if not the brain child, then certainly the favorite nephew of these same three men. Their money has paid for votes, according to L.U.S.T. thinking, and will go on buying men and votes until the neo-Nazi party is strong enough to do more than possess a name and thirty-thousand members.

And so, the trio of expatriates must be caught before the damage they plan becomes a reality. If someone had stepped in when Hitler had been beginning, maybe there would never have been a World War II, I was reflecting.

Another thought touched me. "Hey, what's with this chef I'm to hire? I'm not all that fussy an eater."

David spread his hands. "The chef, Giuseppe Vico, has a photographic memory and possesses the ability for total recall for anything he has ever seen or heard."

"So?"

"Giuseppe Vico has cooked state dinners for such men as Adolph Hitler and Benito Mussolini. He has seen every important Nazi party member who ever lived: Goebbels, Goehring, Hess, Eichmann. He will have seen the three we're after: Heinrich Muller, Wolfgang Oehler, Hans Köening."

David went on talking, explaining that these men would have changed their faces, altered their appearances, but that Giuseppe Vico might know them by some mannerisms which they would still retain from their old

Nazi days. A man often makes little gestures out of long habit. Our hope was that the trio of expatriates would continue to make these gestures and that Vico, with his powers of total recall, would be able to identify them positively.

"It isn't much to go on. All we can do is trust in that photographic memory," he concluded.

"All right, I'll look him up and hire him," I nodded. "When do I leave?"

"Tomorrow evening, on Alitalia, on a direct flight from Kennedy Airport to Rome. You do speak Italian, don't you?"

We L.U.S.T. agents are well trained. "Like a Calabrese," I boasted. "My spaghetti sauce is the real thing too."

"You and the chef can trade recipes on rainy afternoons, then," David nodded. He put his hands palms-down on his thighs, which is a signal he is going to stand up and that my briefing is at an end. This time was no exception.

"You'll probably want to get some sleep, Eve," he added. "I'll be a good sport and cancel our date to go see that new show at . . ."

"The hell you will," I snapped. My hand went out to my pigskin gloves and my Saffian leather handbag. "I can sleep all I want over the Atlantic." A horrible idea came to me. "You were able to get tickets, weren't you?"

"Oh, sure. No problem. Two on the aisle, row C."

My fingers wriggled at him. "Lead on, MacDuff. Tonight I am on vacation. Tomorrow or the next day, I will go see Naples and die, as the saying has it."

"I hope not," David said soberly.

"You and me both," I nodded.

The hit show was great. I laughed and cried a little; I

clung to David during a couple of the more stirring moments. Afterward, we went to the Roundtable and watched the belly dancers. David enjoyed the tummy tossers more than I did, but then he had nothing on his mind; he had done his job of clueing me in on mine. My job hadn't started yet.

We parted company at my apartment door. "I'd ask you in, honey," I told him, "but I really do need my slumber. It's well past three o'clock in the morning."

"Spoil-sport," he laughed.

David and I have a thing going for each other. It would have been nice to have him put me to sleep with some copulative calisthenics, but my heart just wasn't in it. I would have to be satisfied with a sleeping pill.

Gaaahhhh! No sleeping pill in the world has sex.

My nickname with the L.U.S.T. agents is Oh Oh Sex. For a while the appellation used to annoy me. Now I accept it in the spirit in which it is meant: I am a girl who enjoys life and who takes the fun when it comes along, because the misery is always somewhere waiting in the wings.

Next day, I was whisked in a limousine out to Kennedy Airport. A L.U.S.T. man, posing as a travel agent, was on hand to ease the way for me. All I had to do was walk to gate seven and hand over my papers, then beat feet toward a big Alitalia jet liner, waiting for my bod.

Belts on, cigarettes out, all the normal routine. We ate lunch eastward at six hundred miles an hour over the Atlantic. Shades of Chris Columbus! I chatted with one of the stewardesses, a pretty brunette from Naples. Baiae is close to Naples. I told her I was inheriting the Madden villa at Baiae.

"You must be very rich," the stewardess murmured wistfully.

"Not me; my cousin Penny. She's the one in the family with the moola. The bread, honey. Money."

Her laughter was a song. Her brown eyes sparkled. "You Americans, you are a funny people. You have so many words for things. It is very difficult to know what you are saying."

"I'll bet you don't have troubles like that," I chuckled, taking in the stockinged legs, very shapely, the trimly rounded hips in the tight uniform, the twin bulges of her breasts. Luisa Geraci was a dish. "Say, if you get time off from flying back and forth, why don't you come spend a few days with me in my villa? I'll be throwing some parties. Pretty girls always go over big at parties."

She was grateful, patting my hand and saying, "*Grazia*, Miss Drum. I may accept your invitation. I've never been to Baiae."

I got great service the rest of the trip.

In Rome, Luisa appointed herself my companion. She got me through Customs; she hired us a taxi; she made a telephone call to the hotel to confirm my reservation.

As we stood on the sidewalk outside the Hilton Cavalieri, she promised she would come to see me in Baiae. She had to hurry now; she must visit her brother and let him know she had made the trip safely. Her brother was a great worrier where her safety was concerned. He did not trust airplanes.

I signed in at the Hilton Cavalieri. The view from the Cavalieri is magnificent: all Rome stretches out before your eyes. There is a fancy pool and a beautiful garden attached.

I stripped, as soon as my room door closed behind me, and took a hot shower. The time differential between the states and Europe always throws me a little, so I lay down and napped for about three hours.

It was mid-afternoon by this time. I hired another taxi and gave the driver an address just off the *Piazza Agnelli*. The neighborhood was middle class, I saw as the taxi braked at the curb. A couple of nattily dressed men preened themselves when they got a load of my American mini-skirt and the Drum legs.

The men pinch girls' behinds in Rome. It is something that goes with the atmosphere, like the smell of tomato sauce. I am sure these modern-day Casanovas were all for testing out their thumbs and forefingers on the Drum butt, but I had work to do.

The building where Giuseppe Vico lived was a modest apartment house. The smells that hit my nostrils were the smells of all apartment houses I have ever been in, except that these seemed a bit spicier. I trotted up the staircase and knocked where it said 2A.

A woman in a bathrobe threw open the door, fire in her eyes. Her hair was long, a very glossy black. Under the bathrobe I caught a glimpse of black stain and bare skin before she drew its flap closed.

"*Cose voi?* What do you want?"

"To speak with Giuseppe Vico, if I may."

She sniffed, running her eyes up and down my figure. "He won't do you any good. He's had it. But if you still desire to . . . Giuseppe! Giuseppe! A fancy girl to see you."

"What's she want?" a male voice bellowed.

"Come and find out, *porcello!*"

"*Donna sucidia!* I marvel I ever took up with you." A man appeared in the doorway, toweling his hands. He must have been all of seventy, with white hair neatly cut, a face like parchment but with an inner nobility. His fine eyes rested on me, and his eyebrows arched.

He made me a little bow. "You must pardon the

appearance of my rooms, signorina. I have been too busy to clean them, and the landlady has other things on her mind."

The woman swung her hips, fists planted on their meatiness, as she sneered at the old man. He was naked to his belt, which held up a pair of rumpled pants. Rope sandals encased his sockless feet. I got the feeling I'd interrupted something.

"Other things, hah?" the woman snapped. "Who was it bought the vino, hey? Who put his hand under my skirt, hey?" She jerked a thumb at the old man, and her full mouth twisted. "He thinks he is forty again, the old fool. I let him play around—pah, why not? He hasn't many days left to him; his heart is bad. But then he got me wanting a little action, and he couldn't produce, so . . ."

The old man laughed. "Pay her chatter no mind, signorina. She is gifted with a great imagination. She will calm down in a day or two, and then she will be back."

"Never!" the woman said, slapping her palms together angrily. "You have seen the last of me!"

She swept past me toward the door. Before leaving the room, she turned and dramatically threw open her bathrobe. I got a good look at her rather heavy breasts under a sheer black brassiere; a stretch of naked midriff and snug black satin panties bulged outward by her hips. She wore black stockings fastened to a black and red garter-belt.

"Take a good look, signor Vico! It is for the last time. Remember it, because the memory will have to last."

Then she was gone, slamming the door.

Giuseppe Vico sighed and tossed the towel over a chair. "She will return. She storms out of here every once in a while, but she always comes back."

"Why not teach her a lesson?" I asked.

His alert eyes touched my face. "A lesson?"

"When she comes back—you are gone."

"But where is there to go?"

"Baiae, to my villa. I want to hire you as my chef, signor. All the world knows Giuseppe Vico. Your *soufflé au fromage* and your *boeuf a la mode en gelée* are famous, even in America."

"Nah, nah. I have given up working. But thank you anyhow. It is a great compliment."

Now I knew why L.U.S.T. had given me a million dollars. Giuseppe Vico was going to be a tough nut to crack.

"How about a salary of sixty thousand lire the week?"

The old man paused, frowning. "It is a temptation to try the virtue of a saint, signorina. Still, I have enough money laid aside to satisfy me." He chuckled, "With my savings and with signora Biga, my landlady, to satisfy such desires as an old man still enjoys, I am quite content."

"I think signora Biga might appreciate you more if you did a bunk on her for a few weeks."

He looked puzzled. "Did a 'bunk'? An Americanism. Yes. I recall it now. When the Americans were in Rome, I heard one soldier use such a term. I did not forget it. I never forget anything."

"Actually, it's that memory of yours I want to hire—even more than your prowess as a cook."

I had caught him by the handle of his curiosity. "My memory? Now tell old Giuseppe why a pretty young girl wants to hire the memory of an old man! Ah, of course! You are a writer. You want to do a novel about me. The fair fares of Joey Joy."

"Is that what they call you? Joey Joy?"

His smile was impish. "Only the women, signorina. I

brought joy to both their mouths, so to speak, in my heyday."

I giggled, "I'll just bet you did. I almost wish I were a writer, to do a story about you. It might be a best seller back in the states. But I want your memory in another way. "You remember the signora Madden?"

"The one who was shot? *Si, signorina*, I remember her well. Sometimes she would send a car for me when she wanted to have an especially fine dinner. I wept when I heard about her. It is too bad, too bad."

"I am here to find her killer. I don't know whether I'll be able to or not. My hunch is that the killer was hired by an ex-Nazi or perhaps even a number of former Hitler henchmen."

There was a silence. The old man sat on the arm of a sagging easy chair. His room was a replica of himself in a way. Each piece—a Piranesi here, an Albertolli there—was old, but so magnificently constructed that you forgot the age and the worn look; you saw through these to the masterpieces they had been in their youth.

"Nazis?" he asked querulously, as if I had annoyed him. "What has a pretty young girl to do with dead and forgotten Nazis?"

"I think they hired Penny Madden's killer."

"But—Nazis! I served culinary concoctions to all the important ones, years ago."

"Yes, I know. This is primarily the reason why I want to hire you. These ex-Nazis attended Miss Madden's parties. I am hoping—if you come to work for me—that you will be able to identify them."

His big, gnarled hands spread wide. "Others can do this, even better than I."

"They will have changed. I believe their faces have

been altered by plastic surgeons, so that to the ordinary man they will be entirely different individuals.

"But to you, signor Vico, they will not be different. You will remember the way in which one man eats his food, the manner in which another walks. You have what is known as a photographic memory. What you have ever seen, you can remember. It is called total recall."

The old man inclined his head. "It is true. It is one of the things that make me the world's greatest cook. I have a million recipes in this head of mine." His forefinger tapped his white-haired temple. "I do not need to consult a cookbook to prepare *osso buco* or even *molecche*, which is soft shell crabs with fig fritters."

I sat on the edge of an Empire chair and crossed my legs. Like all men, Giuseppe Vico ran his eyes up and down my calves, knees and thighs. His tongue slid around his lips and his black eyes grew warm. To a man who had lived his youth when hobble skirts had been popular, these mini-skirts must be a great revelation.

"Your work would not be difficult," I wheedled. "I would hire young men to do the heavy work in the kitchen. All I would ask of you would be to lend your touch in the making of the sauces, the special concoctions you alone know—and, naturally, to study my guests and try to identify any former Nazis you might see."

"There is a criminal technique of body identification advanced by certain criminologists as a means of identification of fugitives from justice. Hair may be dyed, faces may be altered by plastic surgery, but no man can change the way he walks, the little mannerisms like shrugging or gesturing that are purely automatic."

As an afterthought, I added, "I would be willing to offer you as much as seventy thousand lire the week. That's a hundred and twelve dollars, American money. Plus a

bonus of another half million lire for every former Nazi you can identify."

The old man goggled.

"So much?" he asked, drawing a deep breath.

An inspiration hit me. "Suppose, instead of young men to help you in your kitchen, I hire pretty girls?"

His black eyes met mine. There was a devilry in them that reached out to touch me. I wished suddenly I had known Joey Joy when he was younger. He was still a handsome man, his body looked strong and healthy. He might not be able to cut the mustard as he had done in those earlier years, but I'd have bet my million he had a way or two or three to please a female, even now.

"Pretty girl assistants, you say?" he muttered thoughtfully.

"Pussycat pastry makers."

He grinned, recognizing a kindred spirit in me.

I added, "Like to select them yourself? Give them—er—tests? The way a movie director hires starlets?"

The Joey Joy part of him was hooked. He fought against the temptation, but he was no Saint Anthony. Maybe the thought of his landlady in her satin panties had something to do with his decision.

"Diavolo! I'll do it!" he cried, getting to his feet. His big leathery hands rubbed together. "I shall be your chef and your eyes, signorina. If I see an ex-Nazi, I'll inform you directly. Pah! I am getting tired of these rooms anyhow."

"I'm driving down to Baiae tomorrow. If you care to come along with your luggage, I'll be glad to have you as company."

He made me a little bow. "You offer a foretaste of heaven to an old man, signorina. I shall be grateful."

His hand caught mine. His lips kissed its back as if I

were an Orsini or a Miani, great names in Roman nobility, making me feel like a countess.

Giuseppe Vico opened his door for me, his extended arm inviting me to precede him down the hall. I went down the stairs first with my new chef at my heels.

He paused to knock on a door.

The landlady opened it. She had changed into a skin-tight sweater and skirt.

"Pah!" snarled Jocy Joy, snapping his fingers.

The landlady sputtered her inability to find the right words to answer him. Then she slammed the door.

The old man looked at me. We laughed for close to a minute, leaning against the wall, helpless.

It was dark on the streets by this time. Signor Vico walked with me, until we found an empty taxi.

"Until tomorrow," he said, looking at my stockinged legs, as I climbed into the back seat. He was a leg man, this old boy. There are worse things to be, at that.

I dined alone that night in the Cavalieri, indulging my palate with veal cutlet *a la Bolognese*, baked green lasagna, and wild raspberries and cream puff for dessert. I keep too busy for L.U.S.T. to worry about a diet.

Next morning, at a few minutes past nine, I was standing in an auto salesroom, buying myself a *Maserati Ghibli*. It cost almost seventeen thousand American iron men, but what the hell! I had a million bucks to spend.

I handed the salesman a tip of thirty thousand lire. "I must have the car this morning. This afternoon will not do. Tomorrow will not do." I doubled the thirty thousand lire, as his eyes grew big. He bowed to his waist, flushing with pleasure.

"The *Ghibli* will be ready within the hour," he assured me. I think he went himself to get all the necessary

papers signed and stamped, because he was as good as his word.

In exactly an hour, the maroon *Maserati* was standing in the salesroom lot, ready to go, gas tank full. The salesman all but kissed me when I handed him another huge tip. It wasn't my money, and besides, my orders were to spend it.

Guiseppe Vico was waiting at the curb, his tearful landlady wiping her eyes with an apron beside him. I think she believed I was going to steal her man away from her, because she began to berate me in fluid Italian which was almost beyond my understanding.

I picked out a few words and answered them. "He shall come back to you, signora, a wealthy man. I only want his services as a chef."

She beamed instantly, shutting off the waterworks. She even waved her apron at me, as we wheeled away from the curb and toward the *Via Appia Nuova*, which is the highway to Naples. Money will accomplish miracles, I have discovered. The idea of her star boarder returning with a few million lire in his pockets appealed to her. I hit the road to Naples at a smart sixty miles an hour. You have to drive this fast in Rome to stay up with the traffic. The Italians play a game of dodge-'em in cars every day. Not for them the ordered, prosaic traffic of an American city. Missing fenders and scraping bumpers is the order of the day in Rome.

We headed south along the coast, moving through the Campagna and the plain bordering Monte Calvello. We passed the old town of Cora, said to have been founded by Trojans, Scrimonetta Castle and the Pontine Marshes. Beyond Terracina, the highway flanks the old Roman tombs and Lake Fondi. We whirled past the old stone

walls of Fondi, the main street of which was part of the ancient Appian Way.

We continued on across the plain and up into the mountains. Giuseppe Vico informed me that the town of Itro, which we were approaching, was renowned for the roadside bandits that used to live there. One of the most famous was Fra Diavolo. Then we were gliding through magnificent vineyards and the remains of what once had been great forests.

We caught glimpses of the bay of Gaeta and slowed to a crawl going through Formi, which is a seacoast village where the Italians go to swim in the summertime.

I paid no attention to my mini-skirt as I drove, but Joey Joy did. His eyes practically ate my stockinged thighs, my calves and knees. When the wind blew the mini-skirts up to my crotch, he got a good look at where the pantihose gripped my privacy as well. I think he memorized the Drum contours from my navel downward.

We dined at Gaeta, a town named after the nurse of Aeneas the Trojan, in a small restaurant that overlooked the sun-sparkled waters of the bay. I was enjoying my Italian holiday. The hard work was ahead; right now, I basked in the sights and sounds of southern Italy, the smells of salami and freshly baked bread, the thunder of the Cathedral bells bonging out the hour.

The run from Rome to Naples covers roughly a hundred and forty miles. I made it in a little more than four hours. We pulled into Baiae at a quarter to three in the afternoon.

From the very earliest times, Baiae has been a fashionable swimming resort for the Italians. The ancient city, which flourished in the time of the Caesars, was uncovered more than fifteen years ago by Professor Amadeo Maiuri, an archeologist at the Naples National Mu-

seum. He brought to life one of the wickedest cities of the old Roman Empire.

Baiae was the summer sin capital of the Caesars. Emperors such as Caligula and Nero always brought their courts here for the summer months and, in the Neapolitan sunlight, gave themselves over to orgies and carousels that sometimes rocked the empire.

Magnificent villas, all bordered by lush gardens, flanked one another, making it easy for a husband to carry on with his neighbor's wife, if he and she were so inclined. The baths were public only to the three hundred Roman nobles who could afford the luxury of a summer villa, preferably one which gave an exquisite view of the blue Mediterranean.

Today, Baiae is more discreet about its conduct. There are orgies, but they take place behind towering poplars which hide the view from the Neapolitans. The Madden villa was one such vice villa.

The public road curved beside a great iron fence half hidden behind a row of yew hedges. Massive stone pillars held the iron gates. When I honked my horn, a man in overalls and a torn shirt came running.

"I'm Miss Madden's cousin," I told him. Open up, please."

The gatekeeper knew Giuseppe Vico. He swung wide the gates and watched the *Maserati Ghibli* barrel along the graveled drive toward the sprawling, red-brick mansion. I studied the huge structure.

I was looking at the mousetrap.

In it, I was going to try and catch three vicious ex-Nazis, disguised in appearance but filled with the same old hates and lusts for power. They were trying to start it up all over again with their neo-Nazi party politics. My job was to stop them in their tracks.

As I braked, I told myself I would build the Madden villa into something bigger and better than ever. From that I would need the help of L.U.S.T. itself. Not to furnish my servants. Joey Joe and I could do that. My need was more specialized.

But first, other things occupied my time.

As the front door opened, a woman I took to be the housekeeper stepped into view, staring at the Maserati with wondering eyes. She came out onto the red-brick and marble-railed patio, looking very sad. She guessed that I was the new owner, but I was no new broom to sweep clean.

I waved to her, called, "*Buon giorno, signora*. We are going to take up where the signora Madden left off, you and I."

Her name was Caterina. She was all smiles and bobbing curtseys when I told her the staff would stay on as before, that I just wanted to get to know everybody. She was the housekeeper, all right. It was her job to make sure the villa ran smoothly and without any trouble.

The maids had been let go; she herself had stayed on with the handyman, whom we had met at the drive gate, to keep vandals away. I told her to call all the maids and such back to work. I added that I was going to give everybody a small increase in salary.

The handyman carried in my luggage. I went upstairs to shower with Giuseppe Vico's promise to whip up some liver *alla Veneziana* for my dinner.

I had never been the mistress of a villa such as this; as the water cascaded down over the Drum bod, as I rubbed soap into a froth over my belly, I told myself I would be the lady of the manor to the best of my ability. To make a start, I would eat dinner alone, resplendent in a red

velvet evening gown, with pearls at my throat and on my wrist.

I must have carried it off. There was a noticeable respect in the housekeeper's eyes as I sat in solitary grandeur, feasting on my Venetian style liver by the light of a dozen candles.

I made my call to L.U.S.T. before I fell asleep at night. I told them I wanted a television installation crew on the premises, first thing in the morning.

"I want a hidden television camera installed in every room," I explained to the technicians, when they hit the villa a few minutes before nine next morning. "Nobody's going to catch me napping the way they did Penny Madden."

They put in cameras disguised as ceiling lights. The lights really worked. So did the cameras.

In my room a master control panel was located, hidden behind a metal frieze carved after the manner of a Roman temple. There was a lock to the friezework which would slide back out of the way, disclosing half a dozen picture tubes which gave me the ability to stare into each guest room. In that way I could keep track of my visitors. The flick of a switch threw in another bank of cameras so I could see into other room. In all, four banks would keep me damn well informed about every place in the villa, even poolside if the night lights were on.

The job took a week and a half. I felt a little safer when it was done. And while I was doing that, Joey Joe was selecting three cute Neapolitan cookie-cuties for his kitchen crew.

I met all three, Cara Trapani, a curvy redhead, Theresa Ponza, slim blonde, and Nerina Posilippo, a brunette with a body that should have belonged to a movie star,

one morning after a breakfast of curried eggs, pastry and coffee. They were all damned pretty.

Giuseppe was well satisfied with his crew. Hell! Why shouldn't he be? Also, I noticed they all cast sheep's eyes at him, as he waved his big hands at them, calling out their names. I wondered what sort of tests he had given them, because the fact that they were as well satisfied with him as he was with them was quite apparent.

In the week and a half the tee vee boys had been on the job, I had begun my search for the documents Penny Madden was supposed to have left behind her. They were damn well hidden; I ransacked the villa from top to cellar without turning up so much as an ink mark.

I would keep on looking, of course.

But in the meantime, my better mousetrap was about to go to work. I sent out a batch of invitations to my housewarming party. I found lists of Penny Madden's guests easily enough. Hidden somewhere in those lists, I was sure, were the three neo-Nazis I was out to bag.

And the name of her killer as well.

Chapter 2

His name was Enzo Carra.

He was the best-looking thing I'd seen since I had come to Italy. He had the body of a Greek god, thickly muscled and heavily tanned. He had been flirting with me with his intense black eyes ever since he had bowed at our meeting and taken my hand to kiss its back. He was posing now for my admiration on the diving board, naked but for the brief black *cache-sexe* that hid his genitals.

I was getting dirty looks from a blonde woman whose name was Tea Crescenzi and whose fingers sported three big diamond rings plus a diamond wedding band. I got the feeling my eyes were trespassing on private property.

So I turned my stare away from the bulging *cache-sexe* and assessed the men and women, boys and girls who were playing around and in the villa pool. We were overloaded with visitors this day. Everybody on the guest lists was here to meet Penelope Madden's rich cousin from the United States.

I sure hoped Joey Joy was watching us.

The three men I was after would be here in person. Yes, among the males feeling up the women in the pool were my three ex-Nazis. I tried to pick them out by

female intuition, but I got nowhere. No one in the water or sitting at the pool's edge sipping drinks served by my costumed maids seemed likely prospects.

Incidentally, the maids' costumes had been a last minute brainster. I had studied the girls Caterina had rehired as villa help and was impressed with their good looks and shapely bodies. My common sense told me, after a time, that if Penny Madden had maintained a villa patterned on those of ancient Rome, she would not employ dogs to serve her guests. Her serving girls would be even more attractive than the female guests to keep the men coming back.

When I saw the black servant uniforms these girls had worn when my predecessor employed them, I gave them a mental raspberry. They had to go. I wanted everybody to know, right from the start, that my villa parties were going to be even better than those Penny Madden had thrown.

I started with nylon pantihose and a micro-skirt, which is inches shorter than the mini. All the girls had good legs, thank goodness. Add to these a sheer nylon blouse fitted with a demure white collar, under which you could see all you wanted of their breasts as they bounced and swung, and you get the idea. The girls had good breasts, as well as legs.

I had one rule, like in the Playboy clubs. No fooling around with the help. They were there to admire, no more. Forbidden fruit, so to speak. And a male always rises to that sort of challenge.

I watched hands sliding up the backs of thighs and under the micro-skirts, fingers casually weighing the bobbling breasts hidden by no more than sheer black nylon, and palms patting bouncy buttocks. Eat your hearts out,

boys, I thought. These babes are just for window-dressing.

Oh, I knew the girls were willing for something more than touches and the naughty suggestions whispered in their pink little ears. They knew they could earn something more than pin money by giving in to those invitations.

Nobody was going to get me on a prostitution rap. If the girls wanted to make dates for their days off, this was their business. But not on my time, not while they were earning the damn good salaries I was paying them.

I was startled out of my reverie by the signaling hand of a maid. When she knew she had my attention, she jerked her thumb at the villa patio. I saw Giuseppe Vico standing there, a pair of powerful binoculars in his hands.

As casually as possible, I left the pool and walked the flagstoned path up a slight slope to the villa. My chef was waiting for me, almost bursting at the seams.

"It is he, it is he," he babbled. "Heinrich Mueller! There is no mistake about it."

He handed me the binoculars. "Look at the far corner of the pool where a heavysset man is fooling with the young blonde girl who is no more than a child. He is munching on canapes."

I looked. The man sprang into view with such suddenness I almost swung the glasses away, certain he was staring at me. It was not my charms that had his attention, but those of a thin blonde girl, who looked as if she were less than sixteen. His hands worked her over as his teeth did the caviar on a cracker he was masticating.

Studying his big body in its swim trunks, I listened as Giuseppe murmured, "His left shoulder. It lifts as he eats, eh? Always his left shoulder hunches upward, like a

nervous reaction to the salivary juices in his mouth. It is the dead giveaway.

"In Berlin, when Hitler was giving one of his state dinners, I have seen that shoulder lift and hunch. It was always Heinrich Mueller whose shoulder acted like that. I think, because he was a mailman in his younger days and ate his lunches with his mail sack on that shoulder. He would hunch it up and down to make its weight more comfortable as he ate. I may be wrong; it is a story I heard a long time ago. I have not thought about it in close to twenty-five years."

I watched the shoulder lift in utter fascination. A man may change everything in his make-up but the small, subconscious mannerisms. Heinrich Mueller had made himself a new life. His face was a different face, thanks to some genius of a plastic surgeon. His name was no longer Henrich Meuller. But his shoulder was the same.

My hand patted Giuseppe on his shoulder as I said, "I'll go find out who he is these days. And thanks, Giuseppe. You're doing a fine job."

An imp was in his eyes as he said, "It is I who should thank you, signorina. I have not been so happy in a long time."

I giggled. "Your assistants are satisfactory?"

"They are little devils. Perfect!"

I sauntered down to the pool. I could not be obvious about what I wanted to learn, so I sat down beside Signora Crescenzi. She was a little surprised; she regarded me as a possible rival for her boy friend.

I began by saying, "I'm so happy you could come to my little party. I want to get to know all Penny's friends. I want to do the correct thing and not step on any toes. Your boy friend is most attractive—if you like them strong and handsome. Me, I don't go for that type at all."

She blinked, her surprise ludicrous. "You don't? But I thought . . . what I mean is . . ."

I laughed, "Oh, I admire good looks in anybody, boy or girl or in between. But you can admire something without wanting it. I admire a wedding cake, one of those sugar and spice concoctions a chef like Giuseppe Vico can make into a munchy masterpiece. But that doesn't mean I want a wedding cake."

She was relieved, and her relief made her think she liked me. Her bare brown shoulder touched mine, as she leaned closer to impart confidences.

"I do admit to a tenderness where Enzo is concerned. But I'm a married woman, and I don't want scandal. *Capisce?* Others here, they are the same way." It was her turn to giggle. "I could tell you stories!"

"Oh, please do! I promise I won't breathe a word. After all, if I'm to take Penny's place in your crowd—as I hope I am—I'd like to know all about her friends."

She studied me a moment, eyes bright. "All right, Eve. It's a deal. Maybe we will get to be good friends." She seemed hesitant, so I took a flying leap.

"Good. And where my friends are concerned, the sky's the limit. If you had some sort of arrangement with Penny . . . I'm not prying. I just want to be a pal the way she was."

I let the hint drift off. She nodded, running a tongue tip about her full red mouth. "Well, there was a kind of understanding we had. She used to let me have the room right next to her suite when—when Enzo and I stayed over."

"It's yours, honey. And anything else you want."

She shivered delightedly. "Tonight, then. It's been some time since I've been pleased by that muscle-boy. I find I'm in the mood. Now, about the others . . .

"Hernando Barras is a masochist. He likes to dress up in odd outfits and get his behind beaten. Anna Tolentina is a nymph she takes on three or four men at a time. Simultaneously, if you get what I mean. Francesco Biletti—he's the paunchy one feeling up that blonde child—goes only for youngsters: the Lolita type.

"Nick Nicoletti likes a different woman every time. He's easily bored, claims he knows what a woman's going to say after he's been to bed with her once. A supreme egotist. Look at the redheaded woman—her hair's dyed, naturally—with the young man. That's Carla Montecitorio. She has more money than God and uses it to buy any young man she sets eyes on. Oh, yes. She's had Enzo.

"Veronica Ozaca is from the Argentine. Her husband left her a fortune made in beef. She likes men, period: any age, any type, though I must admit she doesn't go for the muscular ones like my Enzo. Thank God for small favors, say I. Mike Marsala, the guy with the hair on his head, chest and elsewhere, is a brute. He likes beating up on women, slaps them around for kicks. Tony Bentham, he's English, is more or less regular, but he's a real glutton for punishment. Goes on and on for hours on end without let up. Girls have told me he diddles them so long they hurt like hell."

The list went on. There must have been close to a hundred people in or around my pool. I got thumbnail sketches on all of them. I listened good, but could garner no clue about who might be an ex-Nazi. I don't believe Tea knew herself. I tried to remember them all, but I lack Joey Joy's total recall. After a time, I was all mixed up. I felt like booting my behind because I didn't have a tape recorder with me.

I made my excuses to Tea and went back to the house. I could be forgiven for not having brought along my tape

recorder, but to miss an opportunity like this as far as pictures went was unforgivable. In my room I had all the makings for filming motion pictures, and I had discovered that Nerina Posilippo, one of Giuseppe Vico's little cheflets, had a boy friend who was an assistant cameraman for Roma Studios. He had taught Nerina to take movies.

So I borrowed the brunette from the kitchen and set her up in business from an upstairs window overlooking the swimming pool. I fitted a zoom lens to the Kodak and explained to Nerina that I wanted shots of all my guests so I could get to know them better. I also told her she would make herself a tidy bonus if she did a good job.

I went back to the pool, where things were coming on strong. Some of the men had decided to hold a beautiful breast contest. Several of the girls were undoing their halters, flaunting their quivering white globes in understandable pride.

Big breasts and small, huge purple nipples and tiny red nubs, breasts that were firm as rock and others that shook like jelly were there for the boys to eyeball. I was a little surprised to see that some of these older women—Tea Cescenzi and Veronica Ozaca among them—displayed real mouth-watering teats.

In a few minutes, I was the only one still covered up. The men turned to me and howled, "Take it off!"

My hands went behind me; my bikini halter slid down. I am proud of my breasts. They are firm, large, and can just about fit into a C cup brassiere. Naked to my navel, I strutted about the edge of the pool, enjoying the stares.

"Eve wins," a man yelled.

"I vote for Eve, too," yipped another.

I held up my hands. "The hostess isn't in the competition. But thanks anyhow, fellas."

There was an argument over that, the women joining in

because they didn't mind my winning. They had nothing against me—as yet. They didn't want to see any of their rivals get the glory.

While this was going on, my staff was setting up tables and chairs on the patio. Giuseppe Vico and his girls, minus Nerina, were bringing out platters heavy with steaming *scampi* and wedges of *canestrato vecchio*, *zibid-do* grapes and veal *parmegiana*.

So when the argument got a bit smarmy, I signaled for attention and pointed at the patio. Everybody whooped and ran.

I found myself beside Veronica Ozaca, strolling up the flagstoned path. It was a little disturbing, because she slid her bare arm about my equally bare waist, so that our breasts bumped and rubbed together as we walked. I have been known to switch-hit upon occasion.

"My dear, you'll never know how horrified we were when we learned of your cousin's death. It shocked all of us. It's too bad the authorities couldn't find her killer."

I made polite responses, and she went on. "But I am glad that you've come on the scene. Maybe now we can pick up where we left off. I do hope you don't consider me a bitch for saying that."

"It's the way cousin Penny would have wanted it."

She turned and planted her big breasts against mine and gave me a juicy kiss with her mouth open wide. She was an attractive woman, I must admit she stirred a neuron or two in my more private nerves. I gave her soft buttocks a couple of pats. If I got desperate for fun and games, I would keep this one in mind.

We fasted on the *scampi* and the veal with all the females topless. It didn't take much for me to guess we were on the edge of an orgy. A couple of the men would lean down and take a nipple into their mouths, making

puns about wanting a sip of milk. There had been enough liquor served at poolside to make everybody think this was screamingly funny.

Tea Crescenzi had her hand on her boy friend's swollen *cache-sexe*. The little blonde Lolita had her hand inside the one worn by Francesco Biletti. His face was very red, and he kept squirming in his chair. Beyond them, a young man had his hand between Anna Tolentina's thighs, his fingers slowly foraging. The others were doing what came naturally too.

I felt a little left out of things.

Dusk was a curtain being drawn over the villa grounds, when we were done eating. Things had proceeded at such a pace that I thought some of the men were going to throw their partners on the patio tiles and work on them in front of us all.

Tea leaned over to whisper, "Do I get my steady room, honey?"

My nod was some sort of signal, apparently, because the regular stayovers all got up and began wandering off in couples. A number of the newer guests made requests for lodgings, at least for a few hours. I waved a hand and told the maids to show them to rooms not occupied by the regulars.

About thirty others left in their cars.

At ten o'clock, I was all alone.

Well, back to the old drawing board. In my case, it meant my job for L.U.S.T. I wandered up to my room and closed the door. Then I switched on the controls for my hidden television cameras.

Six tubes lighted up. Six scenes from six bedrooms hit me in the eyes. I stared at half a dozen sex scenes—and gulped. This was too much to take in at one time. I shook my head and started over.

I focused on the room next door, first. A naked Enzo Carrara was standing between the spread thighs of Tea Crescenzi, who was seated on the edge of the bed, while she toyed with him with delicate hands. He was aroused --was he ever!--but it seemed that Tea wasn't quite satisfied.

I can read lips a little, but I'm no expert. All I got out of watching their lips was the feeling that, last time they'd met, Enzo had been a lot more interested in the naked body of the woman sitting on the edge of the bed than he was right now. Staring at his manhood made me wonder what kind of performance Enzo put out when he was really interested.

Francesco Biletti was lying side by side on a bed with his blonde Lolita. He was caressing her with a lazy hand, while she squirmed, eyes squeezed shut and mouth wide open. Biletti would take away his hands, and the girl would beg him to continue. He would bend over her, kiss her naked body and run his wet tongue here and there over her flesh. She was just about ready to climb a wall.

Nick Nicoletti was sitting in a chair with a brunette lovely spraddled across his thighs in the St. George position of the Victorians. Her rump was jiggling loosely, as she went up and down and around with her hips. From time to time, as if to urge her to a faster pace, hairy Nick would belt her buttock with a big hand.

Carla Montecitorio was entertaining two men, one in his early twenties, the other in his forties. They were stretched out naked on their backs on the bed, while the woman, her mouth twisted in a lascivious smile, kissed their male excitements.

Later, I learned that she liked to play this game, to tease and fondle two men until one lost his cool and just grabbed and raped her. The one who could withstand her

caresses got half a million lire reward. She always picked men to whom half a million lire was a fortune. It added spice to her game.

I was turning to the fifth picture when a knock sounded on my door. The killer, come to pay a visit? I reached for the little revolver I always carry with me on my travels and went to open the door.

Giuseppe Vico stood there, a big grin on his face.

His hand held a photograph he began waving in my face, exclaiming triumphantly. "There is no doubt. Heinrich Mueller is now known as Francesco Biletti. See his picture? I had Nerina make a copy for me."

I stared at the picture, then turned toward the number two tube. Biletti was kissing the tiny behind the girl was offering him by lying on her front. Her body was actually shaking, she was so hot. Her hands were scratching the sheet beneath her; she was writhing and twisting, mouth wide open as she panted.

Biletti was exciting her until she lost control of herself, the same way Carla Montecitorio was trying the resistance of her two men. I gathered that what the little girl was to do to Francesco Biletti was repugnant to her. Only by arousing her beyond her endurance to resist was he able to get her full cooperation.

"*Macche!*" breathed Joey Joy beside me. "What a fascinating touch of carnality. Miss Madden never thought of such a refinement. Too bad."

A wet tongue tip touched the top of my spine. I shivered as it slid down my bare back to the top of my bikini panties, where the beginning of my buttocks' cleavage was not hidden. His wet tongue foraged.

I cried out in helpless excitement.

Before me, Enzo Carrara was kneeling behind Tea Crescenzi, hands filled with her dangling breasts as his

maleness fed ecstasy into her femaleness. She was tossing her head, her lips opening and closing as she babbled words I could not hear.

The young man lying on the bed with Carla Montecitorio was arching his naked body upward, as her matronly breasts gripped him, their bulging sides stroking his flesh until he could stand it no longer. Lust meant more to him, suddenly, than any amount of lire.

He reached down and caught the big breasts in his hands. His hands tightened. Carla laughed, head thrown back, as his grip on her breasts lifted her away from him. He threw her down at the foot of the bed and fell between her parted thighs.

My mouth went dry. Joey Joy was using his teeth to tug down my bikini panties, and then his tongue was . . .

On the tube, Carla Montecitorio was finding the older man with her bare foot, teasing his excitement, as the overly aroused young man hammered away at her flesh. These three would finish together, probably, in a welter of tossing, flopping bodies.

I began to understand why my chef was such a hand with the ladies. His was an educated tongue. It laved; it lavished caresses where a girl lived. He had me mewling as he worked.

My eyes were taking in the room where Nick Nicoletti was striding around the room with his Brunette in front of him, rump upturned, walking on her hands. The wheelbarrow position is very tiring on the girl, but since this boy was only a one-night stand for any woman, I guess he enjoyed as much variety in his positions as he did in his pussycats.

Even as I watched, he said something and let go of the girl. She dropped to her knees, where she remained a moment, shaking her head like somebody in a daze. I

doubt she had ever encountered a man like Nick Nicoletti before.

Hair hanging down about her cheeks—her carefully set coiffure was a thing of the past, her long brown hair was combless and tumbled, now—she swung about and walked to a chair. She knelt on the chair and spread her thighs, as Nick came up behind her. He crouched down and thrust. Her body shook spasmodically; she laid her head on the chairback and began to wriggle her hips back at him.

There are many varieties for the reverse Venus posture. This was one of them. *El kebachi*, as the Arabs term it, is one of the easiest positions to maintain during lovemaking. It is often recommended by erotologists for very stout women.

Joey Joy was making gurgling sounds, crouched on his knees between my thighs. My hands held his head tightly, guiding it.

On the picture tube, the little blonde girl was on her hands and knees, staring at what made Francesco Biletti a man. She was crying softly, her cheeks wet with tears, her sobs shaking her entire body.

She knew damn well what she was going to have to do in a little while, and she didn't like it one bit. But she was so erotically aroused that she had no choice. Biletti was rendering her the same service that Joey Joy was giving me. The only difference was, Joey Joy did not stop. Francesco Biletti did, until the girl cried out, and then he went back to his devotions. I gather it was a game they had played together before. The sadist part of Francesco Biletti reveled in the idea of forcing the girl into her role of servitor, of slave girl to his lust.

Suddenly, she collapsed, arms giving way as if her body had grown uncontrollably heavy. Her front writhed along

the male body beneath her, as her little hands went out to grip and squeeze.

Her head went forward. Her mouth opened . . .

Under me, Joey Joy was getting me to peak.

My body shook and jerked, but the tension in my flesh was flowing out of me. I told myself I desperately needed this attention, because in the next few hours my every female faculty must be at its peak. I had to be alert, mentally and physically. I could not be bothered by my libido.

I was going to kidnap Francesco Biletti.

Chapter 3

Dawn was a cold redness in the Neapolitan air. I slid through the shadows, trailing the man who was known as Francesco Biletti. He was moving toward a sleek black *Iso Grifo*, lifting the keys from his pocket as he walked. His little blonde *inamorata* was lying sound asleep in the bed out of which Biletti had just rolled.

The *Iso Grifo* Corvette engine thundered to life.

I slid behind the wheel of my *Maserati Ghibli*. I waited until the *Iso Grifo* was beyond the iron gates, then let the maroon *Ghibli* into gear. I rolled out on the roadway just in time to see the *Iso Grifo* round the bend toward town. The *Maserati* purred as it followed. My *Maserati* can do one hundred seventy miles an hour; the *Iso Grifo* one hundred sixty. So I wasn't afraid of losing him.

Ten minutes later I was drawing up to the side of the road, alongside a big spike fence surrounding a villa which looked out over the bay of Naples and part of the city itself. It was a beautiful spot, but I was not thinking about beauty at the moment, except maybe the beauty of being alive.

Because as the gate had swung shut behind the black car, there had been a faint crackle as of electricity from

the iron bolts. An electric-eye beam had opened those gates. It might have been a faulty electric-eye beam that made that faint noise—or something else.

I climbed out of the *Ghibli* to make sure. I selected a hand-wrench from the car trunk and advanced on the metal fence. From ten feet away I tossed the wrench. It hit the metal wringing—and the sunburst of sparks that resulted damn near blinded me. If I had put my hand where that wrench hit, I'd have been a dead dolly.

I let my breath out in a slow whoosh.

I wasn't going to kidnap Francesco Biletti at the moment, that was for sure. He was too well protected. In the dawn stillness, I could hear the deep baying of hunting hounds. A little chill ran down my spine.

Dogs yet, to guard the Biletti carcass.

And where there were dogs, I'd bet a leg there were also armed guards. More reasons for me to return to the villa and make preparations for tomorrow night. I swung back to the maroon *Maserati*, hurrying my steps. The wrench may have set off an alarm somewhere on the premises. I didn't want to stay and be recognized.

I did a hundred on the coast road going home.

To sleep, perchance to dream. This was the first order of the dawning day. After that, I would consider ways and means. It had been a long, tiring night. The Drum bod needed its beauty rest.

Caterina woke me at three in the afternoon.

From my explorations of the Madden villa, when I had searched for the information about the ex-Nazi Penny was supposed to have left for other L.U.S.T. agents in case of her death, I had chanced upon a storeroom closet where she had kept her working-girl gear. It was part of a small room that held a television set, a divan, two lounging chairs and a weaving loom which contained part of a

rug Penny had been weaving. Weaving rugs was her hobby; I had seen throw rugs and scatter rugs tossed here and there about the villa as evidence she was pretty expert in her avocation.

It was the storeroom that interested me the most, however, because it contained, among other paraphernalia, a rubber swimsuit with flippers, an underwater mask and a pair of Healthways air-tank assemblies. I pushed aside everything but the Aqua-lung diving suit.

It was a Capri suit, a contour style outfit that was designed especially for women. I held it up and ran my eyes over it. It was a medium size, for gals with bust measurements of 33 to 37 and waist circumferences of 27 to 31. It was going to be a bit snug at the bust; I am a healthy 38 in the mammary department, larger than Penny Madden, it would seem. It fitted perfectly about my middle.

There wasn't anything to do but try the Capri on for size. I got out of my clothes and slithered naked into the rubber pants and jacket. They fit like a small glove, tight to the skin, but with enough give so they wouldn't slow down my reactions.

My bare feet sticking out from under the pants reminded me I needed rubber boots. There were no boots in the closet, only the flippers. I didn't intend to do any swimming in that suit—just climbing over an electrified fence—so the flippers were out.

Maybe Penny had some rubber boots in her clothes closets. I sure hoped so, because I didn't, and I wasn't exactly aching for a shopping spree in Naples with so much to do this night.

I scavenged around in the closet and came up with a recoilless pistol that fires six tiny rockets, each with twice the hitting power of a .45 calibre bullet. The U.S. Army

is still experimenting with such pistols, but L.U.S.T. had recently adopted this one.

I weighed it in my hand. The recoilless part appealed to me. I have fired revolvers and automatics of varying firepower, and the recoil is enough to knock your arm off. My arm, anyhow. This gun worked on a spring principle. the spring, released by the trigger pull, pushes a plunger forward with such force that the heated air in the chamber ignites the tiny rocket. The rocket takes off, right on target, hopefully—and that's all, brother!

When it hits—*kapow!*

I put the pistol with the Capri suit. Then I scrounged around some more, finding bits and pieces of such things as sniper-scopes and tape recorders, bugging devices and even a handful of Claymore mines. Quite an arsenal for a gal who gave her life to an assassin's bullet. I made a mental note of the closet's contents and closed its doors. When I had a little more free time, I would put a special lock on that door.

I glanced at my Movado. I still had an hour or two for killing, so I went over the hobby room where Penny Madden had spent her off-duty hours, searching it with a fine-tooth comb. I examined picture albums and even the T.V. set for something like a bit of microfilm that would hold what I wanted to find. Nothing.

My attention was caught by the weaving loom. Penny Madden had been working on a floral design cotton throw rug. The heddle, reed and shuttle were still where she had left them. The loom itself was a velvet loom, with each tuft held in place by four interlocking warp and weft threads. To my inexperienced eye, it was a mass of threads that seemed to go everywhere and nowhere. I admired her work, but it didn't help me any. I abandoned

the rug to ransack the rest of the hobby room without result.

I was pretty damn hungry by this time. I toddled down to the kitchen and wheedled Giuseppe Vico into making me a platter of torroncini with meat sauce for dinner. The spaghetti would not be too filling. I figured I had a lot of work to do when darkness came, and I wanted to be in tiptop trim.

I feasted on the pasta *al dente* with a hearty appetite.

At ten o'clock, I was wearing the Aqua-lung rubber suit plus a pair of black boots, with a belt around my middle that held the holstered rocket gun. Over all this, I wore a simple sheath dress. The rubber pants legs fitted me so close they would seem like pantihose to any casual onlooker I might run into. Filled with confidence that I was equipped for man or beast, I slid into my *Maserati Ghibli* and set off for my evening chores.

Braking in the shelter of some bushes, I pulled on a pair of black rubber gloves and began to march for the electrified fence that surrounded the Biletti villa. I must admit my heart was bagging more than somewhat as I laid a palm against the fence wire. I could have been turned into a living lightning bolt if anything had gone wrong for the brief nano-second it took the electricity to kill me.

Fortunately, the rubber insulated by body.

I climbed the fence. I teetered on the top rail, then dropped. Overhead, the moon was a pallid orb between the clouds its light made luminous. I could hear the lapping of bay waters against the stone mole on the far side of the villa, as I moved across the lawn. It was a quiet night, very serene.

Then a dog barked.

My spine went cold. The recoilless rocket pistol held

only six charges. If there were more than half a dozen hounds in that pack, I was a gone girl. I froze into position on the lawn, fully revealed by the moonlight all around me.

The other dogs began baying now. It was a chorus out of some red corner of Hell, and it was growing louder. In a moment the dogs would be in view. And so would I. I turned and ran.

I knew I would never be able to reach the top of the fence before those hounds were on me, and my rubber suit would be no protection against their fangs. I had only one hope.

So I ran like the frightened deer I was, until a fast glance back over my shoulder showed me about eight or nine big wolf hounds bounding merrily along the moonlit lawn, as their beady eyes zeroed in on my body. I could see their big white teeth and the saliva lathering their jaws. My God! I thought. Maybe those beasts are mad!

The fence was in front of me. The dogs were breathing on my heels. I jumped, clawing at the metal fence wiring. If I missed my fingerholds, I would be dragged down by the teeth glittering in the open jaws behind me.

My fingers held. I dug a booted toe-in.

I went up about four feet, when the first of the dogs hit the fence. There was a loud sizzle, a crackle of electricity rioting through its body; then I got a whiff of burning hide. This all took about a split second, because one dog after the other, seeing me hanging there in the wiring just a few feet off the ground and within easy grasp of their snapping jaws, came slam-banging into the fence behind their leader. As each dog hit, electricity ran through its body.

The eight dogs died in a blaze of crackling lightnings.

I hung there, shaking. Then I let go, stumbled over the

dead bodies of two of the dogs and waved my arms like a windmill gone berserk, trying to recover my balance. I crouched there, waiting, listening.

There were no more dogs. Just men.

Three men, running around the corner of the villa wall, were dressed in plaid shorts, leather jackets and feathered caps, like huntsmen out of the Austrian Tyrol. I was not impressed by their colorful garments, but I damn well paid attention to the high-powered Mauser rifles they were carrying.

They did not see me in the black rubber garments, crouching in the dark shadows of the bushes near the fence. My hand fumbled at my belt for the recoilless pistol.

I brought it out into the night air, holding it in my right hand, while with my left hand I gripped my right wrist to steady my aim. I stood frozen, holding my breath. When the huntsmen were fifty feet away, I would shoot.

They came racing on, calling to the dogs and getting no reply.

Maybe some sixth sense warned them, because they began slowing down when they were about twenty yards away. They leaned forward, peering at the fence. They couldn't see me nor the dogs. But the idea of three husky men with high-powered Mausers in their hands being afraid of something they couldn't even see must have struck them as ridiculous.

Rifles at the ready, they advanced.

Luckily for me, they stayed in a little knot. I squinted along the barrel of the pistol, squeezed the trigger. There was a shower of sparks, a jet of flame.

I didn't wait to see whether I'd scored a bullseye. I moved the barrel sideways and fired again. The first man

was already falling, when the second man started to join him.

One more time!

I slid the barrel sideways to cover the third huntsman, who was aiming his rifle at the sparks and flame. As I squeezed the trigger, I dove sideways. The rifle fired at me. I heard the whine of the bullet as it damn near nicked my ear.

I landed on the ground and squirmed about until my elbows braced my arms. All three men were lying on the ground, unmoving. I began inching forward across the lawn toward them, cursing under my breath because of the rifle shot. They would have heard the shot inside the villa.

I snaked my way over the grass until I could reach out and touch the three sprawled shapes in the moonlight. I did not need to touch them, I realized. I am no mean marksman with a pistol. The recoilless gun is even more accurate, in a sense, because of the fact there is no jerk to it as you trigger it off. I had hit each man in the center of his chest, just where I'd aimed.

I had three rockets left in the magazine.

I lay there and waited, expecting some sound or motion from the villa. But the big stone building was silent, dark. As a matter of fact, it was so quiet and so dark that I began to worry for fear Francesco Biletti had taken himself off somewhere else.

I got to my feet and ran for the huge house.

The Biletti mansion—I had been told he leased it from the wealthy Damiani family—was a Renaissance reconstruction of a Roman villa. Its marble facades, pillars, railings and statuary were snow white and so abundant that at first glance they seemed to be made of sugar

candy. The walls were stucco, the many roofs held red tiles and the windows were heavily casemented.

I tiptoed past a pool rich with marble statues of nereids and mermaids. I stepped under archways that held carvings by Canova and Cassou. I saw now that the villa was not dark, as I had suspected it to be; there were dim lamps lighted, here and there, but their radiance had been hidden by the profusion of statues, railed walks and stairways with which the villa house was surrounded.

I stared in at magnificent rooms carpeted by Persian orientals and filled with massive furniture, heavy bronze lamps, suits of armor, giant floor candelabra and other assorted knickknacks. There was a marble fireplace along one wall that towered twenty feet into the air.

Something told me Francesco Biletti was a rich man.

My hand touched a doorknob. I half expected it to be electrified too, but it turned safely enough, and a moment later I was inside in the shadows. I stood listening for five minutes. There was no sound.

I wondered how I was going to find my quarry in a house this huge. There must be at least fifty bedrooms in the damn place. Biletti could have thrown some far-out parties of his own in this wedding-cake pad, but I guess he fancied his privacy.

I walked across rugs an inch or two thick, so I made no sound. A faint hall light showed me iron bars and an ornamental grillework gate that opened into a dining room over a hundred feet long. I just stood there, gaping. Banners hung from the walls—banners that in all probability had seen war service under such commanders as Colleoni and Sforza—and the walls were rich with paintings and carved reliquaries.

My shoulders shook as I brought myself back to the moment. Some day, I promised myself, I would come

here and spend a few hours, just staring like any normal tourist. Right now I had more important things to do on my nighttime stroll.

A marble staircase with a wide red velvet runner was beckoning me to mount it. I ran up it swiftly, three steps at a time, until I stood in the upper gallery. Oaken doors lead off this area into what I assumed must be large, lavish bedrooms.

I tested a couple of the doors. They opened into bedchambers, all right, but they were all empty and looked dusty by the moonlight flooding through their windows. I tried to think where Francesco Biletti might have his sleeping quarters.

It took me close to half an hour to find it. His boudoir was up a small flight of stairs at the far end of the gallery, on a special mezzanine floor that looked out over the great pool and its statues.

Very gently, I opened the door. I stared in at a bed the likes of which I had never seen. Its headboard, which was part of a wooden collar that ran all around the bed to form the attached footboard also, was carved to represent a naked woman. She was lifesize; she sat on a stool with her thighs spread, and everything that made her a woman was carved with exact similitude to life.

Francesco Biletti slept beneath her femininity, his head on two pillows. In the moonlight his face was that of an aged satyr. His hands were folded across his deep chest.

As I got nearer the bed, I saw that the wooden collar in which the mattress nestled was also carved to show the figures of men and women twisted together in the many forms of fleshy love. Whatever unknown hand had made this mattress masterpiece had known his *amor*. I counted seven postures I had tried out at one time or another, as I neared the sleeper.

I put out a hand to hit Biletti with a karate chop. At the same moment the coverlets shifted, as if someone were moving beneath them. I halted, frozen.

Biletti opened his mouth to cry out, his eyes snapped open to stare blindly at the moonlight room. His howl of ecstasy was loud in the night silence. My heart flopped over in my chest.

He was not sleeping. He was awake and being pleased by someone under the sheet and blankets. Whoever it was, must have been damn near stifled.

I moved fast, chopping down, but the light of reason had returned into Francesco Biletti's momentarily passion-blinded eyes. He saw me; he bellowed and rolled aside. He did not know me; I was an evil bogie out of the dark, come like a guilty conscience to haunt his sleep. His right arm flailed out at me. His fist hit me a glancing blow across the neck. I slid sideways into the bed, half on top of whoever was between his thighs.

Biletti was scrambling out the other side of the bed, roaring for help. I was half tangled in the bedclothes. To make my situation worse, the person under the sheet and blankets was bucking like a branco, trying to get the coverlets off and see what the hell was going on.

I put my hands on the bedclothes and vaulted over the wooden collar. Biletti was almost at the doorway. I had to silence his voice that was assuming the properties of mythical stentor, who could be heard across half the world when he bellowed.

I caught up to him at the door. My hands fastened on his nightgown, and ankle-length flannel affair that was as old-fashioned as mobcaps, and yanked. The flannel split, but the force of my tug tumbled him off his feet. As he fell, he rounded on me, sent a fist flying that landed in the middle of my girl-girl belly.

The Drum bod doubled up. I felt like retching.

Instead, I summoned all my will power and dove for him, landing with a knee just under his rib cage, all but emptying his lungs of air. It was his turn to lose his breath, but his hands were fastening on my throat as I landed, and his fat fingers tightened like bulldog fangs.

I forgot my judo and karate training for a brief instant in which I hammered my fists against his face. All I did was tip him off to the fact that I wasn't a man. I heard him gasp, "By God—a woman!"

He rolled me over with his hands still locked around my throat. I think he had some vague idea that he was going to rape me, then turn me over to the *carabinieri* as a cat burglar. Maybe he thought my black rubber garment was some sort of jump suit.

His hands loosed for a brief instant. It was all the help I needed. My wrists hammered sideways inside his arms, driving them wide. At the same instant I doubled up, driving the top of my head against his nose and mouth. It was a hard, savage blow: it made his eyes water; it drove pain through his skull like a red-hot poker; it even knocked out one of his teeth.

I clobbered him with the edge of my hand, right across the temple. His big body spasmed; his mouth gave a shrill cry. He was spitting out blood along with his broken tooth.

"Hit him again!"

I whirled. A naked girl was crouched on the bed, kneeling there with her hands clenched into fists. She could not have been more than midway through her teens. Her face was a mask of mingled hate and ecstasy.

"He is a devil!" she shrieked. "He made me do terrible things to him, vowing he would turn my mother over to

the police for a theft she did not commit if I didn't. I hate him, hate him!"

Her hands went out past the carved bed to a night table, caught hold of a bronze lamp. She stepped off the bed, all slim white nudity, and raised the lamp over her head.

"I'll kill him," she swore, and ran to crush his skull in.

I came off the floor, bashing into her nakedness. I wrestled with her for the vase. "Let go, you little idiot! He isn't worth going to jail for murder!"

She did not want to fight me. Her muscles relaxed, and a moment later she was leaning her nakedness against me, sobbing.

"He is a bad man, a very bad man," she wept. "He deserves to die."

"You bet your life he does, sweetie—and he will. But not here. Not with a cracked skull. He's going to go nice and legal. Just leave things to me."

She brushed her wet eyes with the back of her hand. "Who're you?" she asked between sobs.

"Never you mind. Just go get dressed and get out of here."

"I live here," she told me, "with my mother, who handles the servants for him."

"Where are all the servants?"

"They have the night off. They won't be back until tomorrow. He gives them the night off, every once in a while, when he has bad things to do with the girls he brings here—or selects from the servant girls."

"Get dressed and go to your room. Go to sleep. He won't be here in the morning—and you can tell the police you saw nothing and heard nothing."

"Well, if you think it's all right."

I waited until she climbed into her simple peasant

blouse and skirt, then ran out as if she believed I might be going to change my mind. I turned to the window drapes, tore them into thin strips. I tied Francesco Biletti's wrists behind his back, fastened his ankles together and thrust a bit of torn sheet between his lips, making sure it stayed in place by knotting a length of the ripped drape about his head.

When he could neither move nor speak, I bent and rolled him over. Kneeling down, I slung his limp body over my shoulder. I grunted as I rose upward; he was no featherweight that Francesco Biletti. He must have weighed over two hundred and fifty pounds.

I carried him in the fireman's hitch out of his bedroom, down the stairs and out onto the patio. My legs were rubbery under his weight; I had to lean against some of the statuary and recover my strength from time to time.

At last I reached the front gate. I knew damn well I could never hoist his big body over the electrified metal without electrocuting him. I also knew there must be some sort of manual control for the lethal voltage. I found the switch a hundred yards away in a little caretaker's shed.

I got Francesco Biletti out onto the roadway. By this time he was coming to, emitting muffled grunts and groans behind his gag. He tried flopping his body this way and that. I tried to hang onto him, but I was only wearing myself out.

"Okay, you idiot," I snarled, and stepped sideways.

He fell face down on the pavement.

The fight went out of him when his forehead cracked against the macadam. He lay breathing harshly through his nose, sobbing a little. He probably figured that because I was a woman I would take pity on him. Fat chance. I was

remembering Auschwitz and Treblinka and thinking to myself that this *batarde* wanted to start all that up again.

I grabbed his hair and dragged him a few feet.

Tears were running down his cheeks when I let him go. "On your feet, you creep! Hop the rest of the way!"

He hopped. I opened the car door and shoved him in on the floor, where he lay huddled. "You make one move, buster—and I'll kick your head in!" I rasped. His kind only understand violence.

He was good as gold all the way into Naples, to the little house on the *Strada Forcella* that was L.U.S.T. headquarters. It was almost four o'clock in the morning, but there were lights burning in the building and a skeleton staff to respond to emergencies.

My ring brought a young Texan to the door. I had yanked off my stocking mask long ago, so he recognized my face. I told him what I had in the *Maserati Ghibli*.

He summoned a couple of husky boys, and they carried Biletti into a small waiting room. I told them to leave him tied and gagged. Remembering the way he treated little girls, I wanted him to sweat a little.

"What about the Israeli intelligence boys?"

"I'll alert them. They'll be here in half an hour."

They were, beaming with delight at getting their hands on Heinrich Mueller. I explained to them that I would make a package of films and attach to them Giuseppe Vico's affidavit that he recognized Muller from movies and from direct observation. There was no doubt of his identity, I assured them; they might even have people in Jerusalem who would know him despite his plastic surgery face.

They bowed, kissing my hand. They promised me a military decoration for my work, but I reminded them my

job was only one third done. I had yet to deliver Hans Koenig and Wolfgang Ochler.

"I may not be able to bring them back alive," I warned them. "I may have to kill them—if only to save my own life."

"Consider yourself our official executioner in that event, Miss Drum," one of them smiled. "We couldn't have selected a better one."

It was nice to them to compliment me that way, but I was still worried. Giuseppe Vico had not yet been able to find either Ochler or Koenig among my guests, though he had been studying movies and pictures whenever he was not in his kitchen or playing around with his pussycat pastry-makers. If he could not find them, neither could I.

Yet I had to find them before they found me as they had Penny Madden. With a bullet!

Chapter 4

The masque ball idea had come to me as a way of gathering everyone in the "beautiful people" set of Naples, Baiae and surrounding areas together for another inspection tour. They did not know that Giuseppe Vico would be behind a pillar of the grand ballroom to study them with his sharp old eyes or that Nerina Posilippo would be filming their antics with my Kodak movie camera. They came for good food, fun and games.

I had found a supplemental list of names put down in Penny Madden's own handwriting, while searching fruitlessly for the information she was supposed to have hidden away somewhere. There were people on this secondary list who had not appeared at my pool party, so I had high hopes that my masque ball would expose the ex-Nazis I was after.

Everyone wore gay costumes—and masks.

The masks were very important. While wearing masks, many men and women will let themselves go in the fun line, believing themselves to be protected by anonymity. nobody will know them, if they kiss the wrong person or bare more of their bodies than is normally allowed. Not

that my beautiful people were shy; they needed no such moral protection as a mask gave.

I was hoping the mask would relax one of the ex-Nazis enough to make him let down his hair. He would have more faith in a mask to protect his identity than he might in his plastic-face job. He would forget himself and retrogress to the days when he had been a Nazi. This was the plan.

Me, I was a harem lovely. I wore black gauze cups over my breasts and a thin band about my middle from which fell transparent black nylon *salwar*, the harem pants. In this get-up I gave the world a view of the Drum legs all the way up to my behind. If you cared to peek, you could even see my behind, and vice versa.

Tea Crescenzi was an Egyptian slavegirl in a costume consisting of a simple cotton tunic, tight to her hips and upper thighs, widening a little at the ankles, with cross-straps from her waist to her shoulders. Her heavy breasts shook naked to her strides, bared on either side of the cross-strap vee where the straps met her tunic. Enzo Carra was an Egyptian Pharaoh in striped apron and a *pshent* on his head.

Anna Tolentina was Queen Elizabeth, ruff, hoop skirts and all, except that her stomacher, extending from the low cut bodice to her pubic region, was purple fishnet. Under the fishnet she was stark naked. Hernando Barras was a Victorian gentleman; Mike Nicoletti made a handsome Roman charioteer.

A new visitor, Laura Rioncro, appeared as Miss Cudleigh had appeared at the Gran Jubilee Ball of Venice in 1749, startling and shocking even the loose-moraled society of her day by revealing herself stark naked except for a girdle of flowers at her loins. Inasmuch as Signora

Rionero had the body of a slim Venus, her miniscule rose garland made her one of the favorites of the evening.

Henri Faurot was a harlequin in white and purple costume, Carla Montecitorio was an Empire temptress, wearing transparent white nylon under which she had donned black nylons with red garters. You could see everything under her dress, and the stockings were it, period, not counting her naked body.

Everybody was half crooked—even before they arrived. It looked like a flat-out night, because they all headed for the martini bar after saying their hellos and, later, while the band was striking up.

Jocy Joy could tell what was coming. His grin split his face from ear lobe to ear lobe. I saw Nerina Posilippo behind her camera, frowning worriedly. I guess she could read the symptoms as well as anybody.

Liquor and lovely ladies are always a primer for an orgy. We had martinis, manhattans, rob roys, grasshoppers, sazeracs and whatever you could dream up for the gullet, and uninhibited pussycats like Carla Montecitorio and Tea Crescenzi for the genitals. As a combo, it could not miss.

It began with Paolo Uffenti pinching one soft buttock of Veronica Ozaca. The Argentine lady was wearing the garb of a nun in front; behind, there was just the bare Veronica from her shoes to her neck, outside the black ties that held her costume fastened to her body.

This caress was followed by a tug at the black ties. Her costume started to fall. Veronica screamed gaily and let it drop as far as her navel. Then she caught hold of it and Paolo Uffenti at the same time. They ran for the shadows of the patio.

Hernando Barras was with a redhead in a cavegirl outfit of leopard skin loincloth and matching halter. His

hand yanked away her halter, so that her breasts bounced out in full view. A whoop went up at their outstanding size. She tried to hide them with her palms, but a couple of sazerac-sloshed guests grabbed her arms and bent them behind her. They paraded her through the guests, demanding tribute to her mammary attractions that were bouncing their red nipples up and down like twin batons.

Some kissed these bright red nipples, some pinched them, some contented themselves with drawing gentle fingertips back and forth across the blue-veined skin of the heavy breasts. The redhead was being gotten to; she was panting, and her eyes were glassy before she was halfway around the floor.

As a hostess, I was discovering that I had no need to concern myself about entertaining my guests. They had their own little games to play. When they posed the sobbing redhead before me, I scratched lightly all around the areolae with my silver-tinted fingernails. Her eyes were half closed, glinting with lust behind the long false eyelashes she affected.

She was not alone in her amorousness. Couples were straining together in wide-lipped kisses. They were undoing important parts of costumes, exposing what little had not been seen in the light of the electric chandeliers. Two women were posing with their skirts up to their sacral dimples, comparing their nude buttocks. Somebody slid an army about my middle.

"Some party," said a ripe, lipsticked mouth.

I knew the voice, if not the lips. I couldn't identify, however, so I slid my arm about the bare flesh of this beauty in a dancing girl costume. I knew her. I wrinkled my eyebrows, trying to remember.

Her soft laughter teased me. "You invited me—but I came with Mike," she breathed, nudging me with her hip.

What I could see of her face beneath the domino was familiar. I had seen her recently—but where? As a secret agent, I never get familiar with people I don't know. You can't tell when an enemy agent might show up.

I was about to be undevious about it and ask her who the hell she was, when hairy Nick Nicoletti grabbed her wrist and yanked her away. I stared after them puzzled.

A roar of delight turned my thoughts into another channel. Somebody had pushed a velvet-covered bench away from the wall to the middle of the floor. A woman in the torn remnants of a Renaissance costume had been pulled on her back. A man was straddling the bench and settling down on her.

"A contest, a contest," somebody shrieked.

"A follow the leader *en foulée!*"

"No! No! Everyone has to be different!" a woman shrieked.

"*Si, sì! Con differenza!*"

"Eve, Eve—what's the prize?"

"A brand new car—of your own choice," I screamed.

They screeched at that, crowding around the bench, where the couple was engaged in that most basic of all positions, the man-above, the woman-supine. The Arabs call this *bannechi*, after the manner of the serpent. In India, where one erotologist claims there are seven hundred and twenty-nine (count 'em, 729!) positions for pussycat play, they name this one the pose of Indrani, wife of Indra.

I watched as another couple replaced the first lovers, the woman above, riding the male in the Arabic *el loula-bi*, which is also known as the screw of Archimedes. The screw referred to is an engineering one, not an erotic one. The Victorians termed this the position of St. George; the Greeks, riding the Hectorean horse.

Nick Nicoletti and his dancing girl were not reluctant to join in while the number two couple were still whacking away. The girl put her hands on one end of the bench, head hanging, while Nick took her in the Venus reversa pose. I gathered, having seen him on my television cameras, that this posture was one of his favorites.

The others did not hesitate to follow Nick and his partner. A man perched himself on the far end of the couch and drew his female across his thighs with her bare back to him, emulating Eumolpus of Petronius' Satires, who used this seated attitude to introduce a girl to the pyggal mysteries.

I was a little stunned at these developments. I consider myself an expert in the venery vogues, and I have taught mannerisms and modes to the men and women I have met in connection with my L.U.S.T. duties, but this was hanging it a bit high.

My objection was not moral, but on esthetic grounds.

I just couldn't see all that was going on! Everything was a hodge-podge of heterosexuality. I believe in gathering knowledge whenever and wherever I can, but this was a learning lovcin that was too much too soon. My eyes went from a couple in the bamboo cleft posture of Vatsayana to a couple employing the suspended posture, the woman pressed with her spine against the wall, the man supporting her by her buttocks. They were taking off all over the place, and they could have been posing for an illustrated volume on sexual techniques.

If I'd really had to award a prize, I couldn't. Things were much too hectic for rational decisions. As a matter of fact, the idea of the prize was completely forgotten by the contestants. They were far too busy winning release to bother about winning rewards.

I had nobody to offer the Drum bod to, so I slipped

behind the drapes to find Giuseppe Vico. He was not at his post. The Joey Joy part of him was uppermost at the moment, apparently, because Nerina Posilippo was not with her movie camera.

I sighed. You can't get dedicated help these days. I did not blame them. I was suffering a touch of *donne dans l'oeil* myself. I thought of taking part in the action by profering myself as a partner for a *séance à trois*. It would have been better than nothing.

Then a hand slipped across my buttocks, gentle and tender.

Nick Nicoletti had thought of the *séance à trois* ahead of me. He was forming part of a Gramaneri grappling, which derives its name from that corner of India where one woman is enjoyed by two or more men at the same time. He was in the inferior position, while the second man was performing the rite of *paus-paus* on his side with the woman lying down facing him.

His dancing girl, freed by Nick's interest in torrid togetherness, was stroking my nether flesh with her palms and tickling fingers. I was excited enough without her adding to my anguish. I wanted to shake her off, but she was a bit too friendly. Her fingertips were feathers, and they were driving me mad.

My body shuddered. I pressed into her hand.

She breathed, "*Me sento svenire*, I'm a bit woozey. Couldn't we find a place to lie down?"

"You like privacy?"

Nick might get the wrong idea about me," she giggled.

"Or the right one?"

"I go both ways," she whispered, "but I do prefer men, for the most part. But right now I could go for a little Sapphism."

"I know what you mean, honey," I breathed.

Hell, I might as well. I saw Tea Crescenzi and Enzo Carrara, Veronica Ozaca and Paolo Offenti, as they abandoned the grand ballroom for more private quarters. There were a few other couples also flaking out, so my unknown lover-to-be and I were not exactly sore thumbs.

As we mounted the staircase, I let my own hand do a little exploring. The dancing girl costume was a shredded nothing on the ballroom floor. Except for her mask, the woman was naked; even her feet were bare, and her long brown hair floated over creamy shoulders and down her back. The black domino gave her pretty face the added excitement of mystery.

I told myself she might be a H.A.T.E. girl. H.A.T.E. is the Humanitarian Alliance for Total Espionage, which is L.U.S.T.'s great rival in the espionage field. If she were, she would get me so excited I would be helpless when it came time to choke instead of caress me. I told myself to be on my guard.

There was sex sweat on her bare flesh as my palm ran over it, and the musk scent of aroused femininity. She moaned when my fingers invaded her brown thatch, when I probed for her responses to my caresses. Her mouth opened; she turned her head and bit me on the shoulder gently.

We staggered along the upper hall and damn near fell into my rooms. She was almost a dead weight in my arms, but her hips and upper thighs were jerking in that movement the French name *culetage*. I only managed to prevent a fall by spreading my legs and bracing myself.

She took my posture as an invitation.

Her hand took off on a flight of fancy, and it was my turn to do the *culetage* bit. Her laughter echoed, as she nibbled my ear lobe.

"We won't hurry; we'll take our sweet time," she whispered. "And what a sweet time it shall be."

Yeah, man. Like with amorous arrows digging into my every yearning nerve-end from the red-nailed fingertips feathering me where I did my thing. My arms locked her slim middle; I drew her against me, my mouth locked onto her mouth.

Her tongue was sweet; her lips were wet.

We strained, rubbing breasts and other places. Her fingers loosed my harem slave halter; her mouth took its place at my nipples. My breasts swelled as I urged them between her teeth. I panted as she freed me of my transparent trousers.

We moved like that, crab fashion, toward the bed.

On its immaculate covering we made a union of naked, sweaty bodies. Delight rained over us from the touch of lips and hands on breasts and bellies, on mouths and middles. She was on the bottom, I was kneeling, crooning as she made a feast of flesh for her pleasure.

I told myself I should be at the television screens, checking for possible murderers. My kidnapping of Francesco Biletti would not have gone unnoticed by his two fellow ex-Nazis. Nor would it go unpunished by those gentlemen, as the dead and buried body of Penny Madden could attest.

Somewhere in her spy activities for L.U.S.T., Penelope Madden had made a mistake. She had called herself to the attention of the men she was out to bring down. I dared risk no similar mistake.

But here I was with my knees and elbows pressing into the bed coverlets and with my unknown lover-girl tasting my skin with a practised tongue, groaning and jerking in a fit of flesh frenzy. I could not have moved to save my neck.

If she were H.A.T.E., I was dead.

She went on kissing and licking me; she was just what she appeared to be, a woman with the hots for another woman at the moment. I enjoyed what she was doing so much, I was a reincarnation of Sappho of Lesbos.

I knelt there shaking. I could not move except for my reactions to the pleasure seething in my body. And then my pussycat partner got off the bed. My eyes were closed; I did not see her; I just felt the bed give a little.

"Where are you?" I wailed.

"Be patient, darling," was her reply. "I'm getting ready to excite you to madness."

I let my eyelids rise. I turned my head. My masked maenad was standing near the large oaken chest of my bedroom, tying leather straps to her hips. The strap was attached to a leather *godemiche*, thrusting out from her loins.

The scene reminded me of a painting done by the Marquis Franz von Bayros for a folio entitled "Pictures from the Boudoir of Madame CC, in which one woman reclines on the bed while her inamorata stands in much the same pose as my friend was standing. As I had been the first time I saw that artwork, I was startled by this living re-enactment of it.

"Where in hell did you get *that*?" I asked.

She had been naked on the way upstairs and in the corridor. My hands had told me that. Her giggle was my answer, as she advanced on me.

"No," I stopped her. "Tell me."

"It belonged to Penny Madden," she said. "She and I used to more than once. It was in the chest there, where she always kept it. In a secret compartment."

I went cold. That was a goddamn lie!

While I had been searching for the information Penny

was supposed to have left for her fellow L.U.S.T agents, I had examined everything in this room. That chest, especially. I had taken out all the clothes and sheets and pillowcases that had been in it. I had measured the damn thing against just that possibility of a secret compartment. There was none.

Yet now my girl friend was advancing toward me, practically waving that dildo at me and claiming it had come out of that trunk. I let her get within a foot of the bed before I lifted a foot and extended it toward the *godemiche*.

The masked woman backed away, pretending gaiety. "No, no. Let me do everything, Eve."

I relaxed, turning onto my back. Somebody had put that dildo in the chest quite recently. I had to find out why, and what the dildo was to do.

She put a knee on the bed, leaning down with a hand touching the coverlet on my left side. I caught her right wrist with both my hands and planted my bare right foot in the middle of her belly.

She cried out in surprise as I exerted pressure.

Up she went, caught by the stomach throw—the *tomoe mage* of the judo crowd—sailing through the air upside down, squealing in surprised terror. Her long hair tickled my face as she went up and over me; a flailing foot hit my thigh.

She landed on the floor on her head.

There was a sharp crack.

She lay there limply, one pale leg half on the bed, her head bent under a shoulder at an awkward angle. I knew with one glance she was dead.

My conscience bit into me. If I'd made a mistake, I

was guilty of murder. Killing your opponent in the secret service league is cricket. It's like a war where you get your enemy before he gets you. But you can't go around killing innocent people. That is murder.

I crawled across the bed. With shaking fingers I undid the leather thongs that held the *godemiche* to her naked loins. Very gingerly, I lifted off the apparatus and examined it. If I'd goofed, I would have to report myself to the authorities.

The dildo is not a new thing. It is as old as the first woman who has been in need of sexual solace. It can be a candle or a wooden rod, anything phallic in shape. The instruments of gold and silver mentioned in the Bible are fancy *godemiche's* used by women for their solitary enjoyment. In our modern world a dildo can be found just about everywhere. In Japan, it is an *engi*; in France a *consolateur*; in our more technological society, they have electrical vibrators.

This one seemed to be the normal *godemiche* at first glance. But I gave it more than one look and discovered to my horror that the channel through which the warm water or warm milk could be squirted in the final paroxysm between a couple of females was something more than what it seemed.

The *godemiche* my unknown Sapphist had been wearing was a cleverly disguised .32 calibre pistol. She could fire it by pressing a tiny spring down where the sacks for the warm milk hung. The damn thing would have been inside me; there would have been no wound. And I would have been a dead lady from L.U.S.T.

Just like Penny Madden.

I knelt there on the edge of the bed, shaking.

What a hell of a way to kill a girl! My nerves crawled like tiny lice under my skin, and sweat was a rash of

moisture on my forehead. My hands were shaking. A bullet ploughing up inside my girl-girl apparatus, ripping tissues, making a mush of all my insides. God!

And that girl with the mask, the one who'd been so gentle and so sweet while making love to me, she was the one who'd have pulled the trigger. A sob corded my throat. I hadn't been quite this shook since I began working for L.U.S.T. All I could do was kneel there and make like a leaf in a strong gale, shuddering all over.

After a time, with the gun-*godemiche* clutched right in my hand, as if I was afraid the thing would still kill me, I knelt down beside the dead body and ripped away the mask. I stared, trying to remember. I had seen that face before. I knew it.

Of course! It was the face of the stewardess who'd talked to me on the Alitalia plane on my flight from New York to Rome. Luisa Geraci.

It had been a near thing. If I hadn't examined that clothes chest so carefully, I'd have been taken in by her talk of a hidden panel. My meticulousness had been her mistake.

I had to get rid of the body, now.

My feet pressed down the carpet, as I walked toward the television consoles, dead and inert, so the picture tubes reflected the body of the masked woman. I reached out for the control switch—I wanted to check on the rest of the villa rooms and see what was taking place—when I saw a different reflection.

The door to my room was opening.

Enzo Carra was stepping naked into my room, staring at me where I stood just as naked in front of my control panel. Well, he wasn't quite so bare as I was.

He held a gun in his hand.

Chapter 5

I must amend that next-to-last statement.

My fingers still clutched the *gun-godemiche*.

In the tube glass I saw Enzo Carrara stare at the naked foot and calf resting on the bed, then whirl to stare at me. I think he believed the foot belonged to me until he saw my face. I also believed he and the masked woman were working in cahoots.

That was all my thinking at the moment.

His gun came up, leveling on my belly. I aimed the *gun-godemiche* at his head and fired a moment before his finger pressed his trigger.

They are training soldiers bound for Viet Nam in quick-firing, these days. In the jungle terrain a soldier doesn't often get time to aim his M-14, so the Army and the Marines have instituted a program to teach their men to fire from the hip, so to speak. You don't take aim as such; you just fire where you think the bullet ought to go.

I'd taken a short course in this at the L.H.S.T. training center outside Washington, D.C. My instructor started me off by showing me to point my left hand and forefinger right at the target I was aiming at. I held the rifle—and later, a revolver—in my right hand.

In this quick firing course, you soon learn to squeeze

your trigger while sighting almost instinctively. I was amazed at how quickly I could snap off a shot and hit a mark the size of a man's head at fifty paces, without taking time to do more than turn to see my target popping into view. I hit that head nine times out of ten.

My instructor would have been proud of me tonight. The .32 calibre bullet tore a hole in Enzo Carrara's chest, an inch to the right of his heart. His knees bent, and he fell straight down.

He was gasping like a gaffed fish, his body flopping around on the thick carpet. I went to him, knelt and put a hand on his chest, examining the wound more closely. It was a mortal wound, no doubt about it, but he was still alive.

His eyes opened, fastening on me. He licked his lips with a tongue, nodding his head slightly. "I knew some day . . . this might happen. Please? Can you call a priest?"

"At this hour? To the villa? Can you imagine a priest walking into this vice den with that orgy going on downstairs?"

"Please! I must go to confession!"

He seemed more disturbed by the idea of not confessing his sins than he was at the idea of dying. He had been born a Roman Catholic; he had lived as a Roman Catholic, but in late years he had fallen away from the church.

"You," he whispered. "You hear my confession. You go to a priest and tell him. He can give me absolution after I'm dead, I think."

The short hairs at the nape of my neck prickled. I am not a religious person. I didn't want to get involved with something like this. But the mute agony in his eyes persuaded me.

"All right, I'll do what I can. Yes, yes, I'll go see a priest and tell him what you tell me. Go ahead."

"I—I don't have much time. I've killed five people. Tell the Father I'm heartily sorry for what I did."

"Penny Madden was the last?"

He nodded, whispering how he had conned Tea Crescenzi into swearing to the police that he had spent the night in her arms and that he could not have been guilty. She was in her bedroom right now, ready to swear again that he had not left her embraces all night long.

"Why did you kill her?"

"For money. He paid me five million lira for the job. He also paid me that amount to kill the others."

He was growing weaker, his eyes filming over.

I bent closer. "Who? Who paid you?"

I had no way of knowing whether a priest would ask such a question, but I was killing two bad birds with one chunk of rock.

"Marcello Laureano."

"Where does he live?"

If he had not been so close to death, I don't think he would have answered that one; but he was on the edge now. He knew it and was reverting back to his early boyhood, when his religion had meant so much to him. It was unthinkable that he would lie to a priest when he was going to die in seconds. And in his dying eyes, I was the priest.

"The *Stradda della Marinello*—number 346," he breathed.

His eyes rolled back in his head. His head fell limply to one side. I reached out and closed his eyelids, still kneeling there, reflecting on how I had just killed two enemy agents in less than five minutes. This was fast work, even for me.

Now I had two bodies to dispose of.

It was close to one in the morning. Downstairs, the orgy was still going strong. I could hear the bull bellows of rutting men and the high-pitched squeals of the girls they were diddling. Nobody would notice little old me tiptoeing down the back way—I hoped!

I drew a black lace jump suit on over my nakedness. I wrapped a scarf around the red throat of the dead killer. I got his limp body—it was too soon for rigor mortis to set in—up on a shoulder, the way I'd carried Francesco Biletti, and carried him out into the hall and down the rear stairs.

His flashy Lotus Europa was parked not far from the entrance gate. I wedged him into the middle of the front seat, propping him up against the center console and the suicide seat. His head lolled back. From a distance, he would appear to be a guest sleeping off too many sazeracs.

I went to get Luisa Geraci.

The orgy was at its height. I caught a glimpse of two men twisted around a naked woman, holding her between them while they stood on either side of her making a sandwich. She was screaming thickly, head back and mouth wide open in this version of the Arabic *dok el outed* posture. A little beyond them, two women had a man down and were forming the posture called *uniter* by the erotologists of India. One woman was mounted on his loins, the other above his face. Each woman held the other by her bobbing breasts, alternately squeezing and caressing. Sometimes they leaned forward to kiss.

I figured I was safe for a little while.

As I carried the dead stewardess toward the Lotus Europa, I gripped a small harpoon-gun in my right hand. I'd gone to Penny Madden's closet for the spring-guns; I

figured I might have a special need for it before the night darkness faded into dawn.

I shoved Luisa Geraci in beside Enzo Carrara. They lay like lumps against the hammocklike bucket-seat to my right, as I started up the modified Renault engine. Under the hood, the motor throbbed silently, ripe with power. It was too bad I had to destroy this car, but it was the bed Enzo Carrara had made for himself, so let him lie in it.

Since I had no intention of walking back from this one-way trip for the two dead bodies, I needed a means of lone locomotion. I hunted around in the villa garage until I found a bicycle owned by one of Joey Joy's pussycat pastrymakers. I figured she was getting her jollies somewhere at the moment and would have no use for the bike.

I shoved it into the Lotus Europa.

I drove swiftly along the coastal road, away from Baiae toward Mandragone. Close by Patria the road veers close to a high cliff guarded only by a narrow wooden railing. As my foot pressed harder on the accelerator, as my speed mounted toward a hundred miles an hour, I got ready to turn.

My right hand held the harpoon gun, my left was wrapped about the steering wheel. I held my breath as my left hand dragged the wheel sideways.

Tires screeched, the car bumped and rammed the wooden railing. The wood cracked apart, shredding and splintering. Through a rain of those splinters, I could see the rocks below and the foaming waters, just as my left hand flew to the door handle.

I dove out, my leg hitting a bush growing into the side of the cliff. At the same time I fired my harpoon gun upwards. If the steel arrow fastened to the steel cable on the gun failed to hit its target, I would splatter all over the rocks below, seconds after the Lotus Europa.

The cable sizzled. The steel arrow thunked home.

The gun lock caught and held. My body was slammed hard against the rock cliffs. Below my waving feet, as I dangled in mid-air, the Lotus Europa hit and exploded. Red flames erupted skyward for fifty feet. I could feel the heat, hanging there at the end of my cable-gun.

Clinging to the gunbutt with both hands, I placed my feet against the rock and made my climb. It was hard work. I was damn tired, mentally, physically and emotionally by this time. When I got to the roadbed, I freed the harpoon-gun and carried it in a hand, as I began my walk to where I had shoved the bike out onto the road before crashing the fence.

Dawn was across the world, as I wheeled my way onto the villa grounds. I had cycled back along the coastal road without letting anyone see me because at the first hint of an approaching car, either by sound or by headlights, I'd simply stepped off the road and taken refuge in some bushes.

I put the bike where it usually stood and staggered by waw into the villa. The bash was over, but the melody lingered on with a dozen naked men and women draped over the floor and furniture, drunk and sleeping. I stood a moment, listening to the snores before I went upstairs to my own rooms.

Enzo Carrara had bled on the carpet, I discovered. I made a mental note, as I was falling facedown on my bed, to send to L.U.S.T. headquarters first thing in the morning for them to pick it up and shampoo it to get those blood stains out.

I built up the zzzzs like a newborn babe.

I was awakened by a frightened Caterina about an hour later. My bleary eyes stared up into her white face, as I tried to remember who she was.

"Whassa matttrrr?" I gargled.

"It is Giuseppe. He has suffered a heart attack, signora!" she panted, bending over me, her hand still gripping the shoulder she had shaken to wake me up.

"Oh my God," I breathed, and swung out of bed.

Caterina said nothing about my black lace jump suit. I think she believed me to be a first grade kook—albeit a generous one with the money—but this was none of her concern. If I wanted to go to sleep in a jump suit under which I was stark naked, it was no skin off her proboscis.

Fortunately, I had hidden the gun-godemiche and the cable pistol. Servants' tongues wag even in the happiest households, and the money I paid Caterina kept her loyal only just so far.

I ran down the hall with her in hot pursuit, down the stairs and across the lower hall, until I reached Giuseppe Vico's little bedroom.

A weepy Nerina Posilippo was crouched in a leather armchair, her nakedness covered with a thin robe. Her cheeks looked puffy and tear-stained below the big eyes that stared at me in utter fright.

"It wasn't my f-fault," she cried. "He in-insisted!"

I waved a hand at her and stepped toward the bed where Joey Joy lay doubled up as if with cramps. His lips were blue; his flesh was ashen. For a moment I was afraid he was dead.

I knew a little about first aid. I turned him over on his back, began pressing down on his chest in a steady rhythm, depressing his breathbone about two inches, squeezing his heart against his spine so the blood inside it could spurt into his arteries. I told Nerina to get off her can and, instead of crying, put her mouth to that of her boy friend and force air in and out of his lungs so as to give oxygen to his brain.

I gave Caterina a number to call and told her to ask for a doctor, mentioning my name. The number was for L.U.S.T. headquarters in Naples. They would send one of our men as fast as possible.

The doctor arrived less than half an hour later. By that time Nerina and I had managed to keep a weak heartbeat going. Caterina went to let the medico in.

He worked over Joey Joy for about fifteen minutes with a hand respirator that he clamped over his mouth and also injected sodium bicarbonate to neutralize the acids that might have built up in his body. He was a young, intense man with shaggy black hair, a rumpled suit and a tie he wore askew against his shirt. Doctor Enrico Vicelli was too busy keeping his patient alive to worry about his personal appearance, however.

When he was done, Giuseppe was breathing more normally.

Doctor Vicelli shook his head at my upraised brows. "There isn't much more I can do. His heart is old. The aging process has hardened his arteries, and I more than suspect that their interior walls are coated with fatty substances due to the various food and drink he's swallowed over the years."

He bit his lip, frowning down at the motionless body on the bed. "My guess is that the platelets in his blood have reacted to those fatty materials and have built a massive blood clot."

"He won't die, will he?"

"He will if he doesn't get a new heart."

"A new heart? You mean with a heart transplant?"

He nodded.

"We've got to get somebody willing to let us use his heart, in other words. Can you do the operation?"

"I studied at the Maimonides Medical Center in

Brooklyn, later at the National Heart Institute. I can do the operation. I'm at the Strada Clinic. If you find somebody willing to donate his heart, let me know. I'll gladly perform the transplant."

I muttered dubiously, "He doesn't have much chance even with a new heart, does he?"

"If the rest of his body is healthy, he might. Most heart transplant patients die because of other ailments not directly related to the heart: a bad liver, a disease contracted in a weakened condition, that sort of thing."

"Well, the worst I can do is try," I said.

His smile was grim. "Got a victim in mind?"

He meant it as a joke, but oddly enough I did have a victim picked out: the man named Marcello Laureano. He was the man who'd hired Enzo Carrara to kill both Penny Madden and yours truly. It was only fitting that the man who paid to kill would donate his heart to keep a man alive.

My problem was, how did I get him to donate his heart? I could scarcely walk in on him on the Strada della Marinello, throw him over a shoulder as I'd done with Francesco Biletti and make off with him. Or could I?

I knew his address, *numero 346 the Strada della Marinello*. Was this Marcello Laureano one of the ex-Nazis? Marcello Laureano had never appeared at any of my villa parties nor, to my knowledge, had he ever shown his face at a shindig thrown by Penny Madden.

There was no law that said all three of the former Hitlerites had to like orgies, of course. It might well be Marcello Laureano did not care for orgies, that he went in more for the private sort of entertainment. Perhaps he had no need for sex; some people do not.

I was very anxious to see this Marcello Laureano.

Over my black lace jump suit, I drew on a mini-skirted

sheath dress. The lace leggings of the jump suit would appear to be patterned stockings. I slipped my feet into shoes and was almost ready. I selected a shoulder-strap handbag, large enough to hold my little pearl-handled Belgian Bulldog revolver.

The *Maserati Ghibli* made a good time along the *Strada della Piedigrotta*. I eased my way in and out of traffic until I was on the *Via Roma*. Not long afterward, I was parking the *Maserati* three blocks beyond the red-brick house which bore the number 346 on its stone step.

I could hear the waters of the bay of Naples lapping against stone pilings, as I moved toward the house. Its front faced the street; its back windows overlooked the bay. It was a pretty neighborhood with iron fences painted black or white, with window boxes boasting dozens of flowers.

I walked past #346. It was dark now, and the lamps along the quays sent up a pale radiance matched by the street lights near the corners. There were lights on in the upper stories of 346 *Strada della Marinello*. I waited until I was the only person on the street.

I darted into the shadows behind the black iron fence of 346. I slipped forward until I could bend and peer in a first floor window.

My stare took in a dining room of some sort. Beyond it was a doorway that showed a dimly lighted kitchen with part of a kitchen table in view. I stepped back and glanced upward, wishing I had the suction discs for elbows and knees I'd worn on a recent case.

The building afforded a few handgrips and toeholds here and there where window ledges and an occasional brick projected, but my best bet was to pick the lock of the downstairs door and go right in. My father is a locksmith. He taught me the art of keys and bits and

bolts. I can crack any safe made, if I make my mind up to do it. A simple lock mechanism such as this door boasted would take maybe a minute to open.

It took me thirty-seven seconds. In my handbag, along with my pearl-handled revolver. I carried a small kit of burglar tools. I slipped out a pick and pushed it into the door lock. A little wriggling of the pick, and the lock slid back.

I eased myself inside and closed the door.

The house was silent. The odors of cooking—mealtime was over by about three hours—still permeated the downstairs section. I moved forward along the hall. There was a staircase to my left.

Gingerly, I put a foot on the first tread and even more carefully applied my weight. The step did not creak. I went up the first five treads and paused, listening. I did not have a complete plan in my head for getting a dead Marcello Laureano out of his house and to the hospital. I was playing it by ear.

I went up the rest of the stairs swiftly. At the top, I kicked off my shoes and slithered out of my mini-dress. In the black lace jump suit, I tiptoed forward, hidden by the shadows. This upper hall was dark, only a thin thread of light gleamed from under a door to my left. I had to open that door; my man might be behind it.

I did it slowly, gently. Through the half inch of space that resulted, I peeped in on two men in dressing gowns bent over a table, playing cards. They were big, heavysset men, far too young to be Marcello Laureano. If Marcello Laureano was an ex-Nazi, that is.

I did not know what Laureano looked like. I was working on female intuition and plain dumb luck. But I had an idea on how to find out when I came face to face with a possible suspect.

I went up the next flight of stairs, as silently as I'd climbed the first staircase. When I reached its top, I could hear voices coming from a closed doorway. I froze motionless.

"... isn't any doubt about it. Both of them—in Carrara's car. Burned to a crisp. Almost unidentifiable."

If they're unidentifiable, how can we be sure it was Carrara and Geraci?" murmured a lower, more guttural voice. It may have been my imagination, but I was convinced that the voice held Germanic overtones in its Italian pronunciations.

"The car was identified. It belonged to Enzo Carrara. There was a female body with him. Since neither of them have reported in, I assumed it must be Carrara and Geraci. The police haven't been able to identify them, however."

"Mmmm, you're probably right. Carrara is always prompt on the theory that, if he pleases us, we'll keep hiring him. And Luisa—ahh, I shall hate to lose her. She was a devil, that one."

The man sighed heavily. I could have cut the regret in that sigh with a knife. Well, he was right about one thing. Luisa Geraci was a devil right now, if Satan looks after his own.

I waited breathlessly.

The man with the silkier voice now asked, "What do we do about this Eve Drum? Do you think she killed them?"

"Idiot! Of course she killed them. You don't think they did away with each other, do you? Who else could it have been? Luisa was to make her try first, for fear Carrara would be unable to slip away from that Crescenzi woman.

"Apparently, she failed. Perhaps Carrara, when she did not notify him of the success of her assignment, went looking for her—and stepped into that Drum bitch's clutches. *Gott in Himmel!* I wish I knew how she did it. Carrara and Geraci were two well-trained agents. You know Luisa's work in the past. And Carrara had a good record for us."

"She's no ordinary woman, then. No one who wasn't a damn good secret agent would have been able to escape both of them."

"And get rid of their bodies in such a manner! I begin to worry about this Eve Drum. I shall have to send Wo and Wann after her."

Wo and Wann. German for Where and When. Were they the two men downstairs? I told myself it might be a good idea to get rid of them after I'd made sure of Laureano. I moved beyond the door and flattened my back against the wall.

"You want me to send them up here for orders?"

"No, I have to make plans. They aren't like the other two; they're beefy strongmen without much brains. Luisa and Carrara could think their way in and out of situations. Not them. No, no, I'll have to give it some thought. I rather imagine I'm safe enough from discovery—and I'm damn sure Wolfgang is."

"All right, I'll be running along. I'll be back tomorrow morning, in case you've had a brainstorm."

The doorknob turned. The door opened and a slender young man came out into the hall, his back toward me. He did not turn his head, he just closed the door and started toward the staircase.

I stepped forward. The edge of my right hand chopped down at his neck. He turned his head just the slightest,

but he never saw me. My hand dug into his throat, and he toppled sideways.

I caught him before he hit the floor and eased him down. He lay there breathing fitfully. I dug into my handbag and eased out the little Belgian Bulldog. Holding it firmly, I threw open the door and stepped into the brightly lighted room where Marcello Laureano—or Hans Koenig, as I hoped—was seated behind an exquisite Castelli desk.

His head had been bent over some papers. He looked up as I entered, surprise in his dropped jaw and wide eyes. He was the Slav type, yellow hair cut in a crew, high cheek bones, full bull neck. His rather tight jacket emphasized the fact that he was heavily muscled. I could see big bulges rippling under the jacket as he shifted position.

He started to rise. "Don't say a word," I warned, moving on silent feet into the office. "And sit down!"

My female instincts told me I'd stumbled on the heart of operations: ex-Nazi. A Nazi flag—a black swastika on a white field—was hung beside a framed photograph of Adolph Hitler on the wall behind Laureano. To my right, half a dozen file cabinets took up space below a row of pictures that showed some of the Afrika Korps, the commanding officers of the regiments that had fought at Stalingrad, and half a dozen Prussian generals.

To my right, there were two leather easychairs, a step table between them, and along the wall at their backs, a huge sectional bookcase crowded with volumes.

Marcello Laureano smiled. "Miss Drum? Eve Drum?"

"And you're Marcello Laureano, born Hans Koenig."

His pale eyebrows rose. "You are well informed, very well informed, Miss Drum. Am I to assume Enzo Carrara—what is your expression?—ratted on me? Or was it

Luisa Geraci? When we discovered that Miss Madden had a niece who was coming to take over her villa from the United States, I made sure I had an agent on all possible Alitalia flights from New York."

"You must have a formidable organization."

"We have done very well—until your arrival," he told me unctiously. He sat there quite calmly, as if he were the one in control of the situation. There wasn't a quiver to his hand, as he reached toward a mahogany humidor. "May I smoke? I do relish the taste of a good Corona when I find myself in a ticklish position."

Something was wrong. He was too damn relaxed. It was as if he knew something I didn't, something that gave him the hole card in our little game.

He put the cigar to his lips.

My gun came up, pointing at his forehead. "Hold it," I snapped. "Put the cigar down. Now!"

His confident smile faded. He looked at my face, at the Bulldog, then sighed. "You are a very perspicacious young lady, Miss Drum. There is no need for hysteria. I will not smoke."

He was about to place the cigar in the humidor when I told him to toss it my way—gently. He did so. I bent and picked it up. My fingers tightened, feeling something solid inside the outer wrapping of tobacco.

"A blowgun of sorts," Laureano said softly. "It contains a tiny needle tipped with a very deadly poison. Very deadly and extremely fast-acting." His broad shoulders shrugged. "You win a few, you lose a few. Tell me, Miss Drum—what made you suspect it wasn't a real cigar?"

"Most men either cut or bite the ends off . . ."

I felt a draft of air along my back. I whirled.

I was fatally slow. The two heavysset men I had seen in the room below this one, minus their lounging robes and

clad in tight jersies and chino pants, were thundering through the doorway and on top of me before I could squeeze the trigger of my gun.

I went backward off my feet before the five hundred pounds of beef hurtling into me. Even as I was flying through the air, I sought to get the muzzle of my gun against a ribcase and fire, but a big hand held my wrist like an iron vise.

As we hit the floor, with me on the bottom, the man who held my wrist banged it against the floor. The Bulldog flew from my fingers and slid along the carpet.

Chapter 6

I brought a knee up into a hard-muscled belly. The man who owned the belly whoofed and went limp. I tried to roll sideways under the second muscleman, but he was too heavy to budge. He just laid his weight across my wriggling body and pinned me down.

So I used a little-girl fight gimmick.

I bit his ear.

He howled, head thrown back. His weight came off me just enough so I could whip a forearm across his throat, while at the same time sliding my other forearm under his neck. I grabbed hold of my elbows, one in each hand, and applied pressure.

His neck was between my forearms, being squeezed so he could not breathe. His face started turning purple. In another minute or two I might have killed him, but his pal had drawn some air into his lungs and was stabbing a ham like paw for my hair.

He caught my blonde tresses and yanked back.

Tears sprang into my eyes from the pain. It was either let him pull my hair out by its roots or relax my neck grip. I released the grip, at the same time putting my hands behind me, palms flat on the floor.

With him tugging at my hair and a kick of my female legs, I was able to do a handstand. Aiming my head at his nose, I broke the stand and came down hard on his face. I heard cartilage crunch, just as he screeched with the pain of a crushed nose.

I fell on my behind, kicking out at the side of his head with my left foot. It landed, thudding against his temple. What with the pain of his crushed nose and my kick, he passed out for a moment.

I flopped over, leaped for his buddy. I landed with my crotch over his face, my arms under his arms to lock my fingers behind his neck in the *kuzure kami shiho gatame*. In this upper four quarters hold, by humping my hips up and down, I could bang the back of his head on the floor.

I bounced out a bugaloo beat with his skull against the bare boards, until he went limp. I was getting to my feet when I saw Marcello Laureano, my Belgian Bulldog in his meaty hand, staring at me with bulging eyes.

"You are a Valkyrie," he growled admiringly.

The pistol barrel did not waver, however, despite his admiration. Its barrel was aimed right at my cute belly-button under the black lace jump suit. I sucked in my gut in a reflex action.

"I never thought any one person could defeat Wo and Wann in a hand to hand fight, let alone a girl," Laureano continued. "They are very strong men."

I got to my feet, slowly, eyeing the gun. "They're too musclebound; they can't move fast enough," I muttered, tensing.

He would not shoot me. I had to gamble that he wanted me alive and well to answer questions. So I dropped and hurled myself sideways, lashing a foot out at the Bulldog. My toes caught it alongside the barrel, drove it sideways.

I dropped both feet on the floor and launched myself at Marcello Laureano. He turned a grotesquely surprised face at me, his eyes wide and frightened. He was no muscleman like Wo or Wann. He was soft from years of good living. My hand drove for his throat.

My hand's edge hit home with a solid thump.

Laureano gagged, mouth wide open. His hands flew to his neck, just as my left foot caught him in the solar plexus. He staggered back, slamming into the sectional bookcase, dislodging half a dozen volumes. I tensed to follow him.

Something caught me a blinding blow on the back of my skull. I swayed a moment, racked with pain, only barely seeing Marcello Laureano. My knees felt as if they had become unlocked, because next minute I was pitching forward on my face.

Water drenched my golden hair. I was lying facedown on the edge of a carpet. A man was standing over me, a glass pitcher in his hand.

Somebody said, "Heave some more on her."

I gasped and pushed myself up on hands and knees after that second deluge. I shook my head to clear it of water and pain. The water went flying off my hair in little drops, but the pain stayed on.

Marcello Laureano was seated in one of the leather easychairs, gingerly feeling his neck. Wo was having his crushed nose attended to by Wann, who had a bandage over the back of his head. Where and When? I wondered if Marcello Laureano had that good a sense of humor.

The character who had knocked me out and who was now engaged in sloshing ice water over my skull was the slender young man whom I'd belted out in the hall. He had come to just in time to do all the damage.

"Enough! She's conscious. Tie her wrists behind her."

I was too weak to fight. I could just about stand up after my wrists were encased in strong cord and the slender young man dragged me off the floor. I swayed a little, facing Laureano.

To my surprise, he was not angry. His fingers were caressing his swollen throat—there were purplish bruises forming there—but his face seemed almost bland.

"You are very adept, Miss Drum," he commented. "Extremely so. You make me almost afraid of you. If it had not been for Stanley, you might have conquered my entire household. A slim girl like you. Pretty, too. Most amazing."

I said nothing. What was there to say? It was the ex-Nazis' time for gab, and gab he did.

"I must assume you killed Luisa Geraci and Enzo Carrara. Eh? You won't talk. Oh, but you will—in a little while. Do you know this house used to belong to the Borgia family? Cesare Borgia bought it in the year 1495, when he was in Naples fighting beside Charles of France against their Spanish majesties, Ferdinand and Isabella.

"Its cellar is a torture dungeon. I have kept all the old instruments his agents used in those times, after repairing and refurbishing them. I have even experimented a few times with some of them—on personal and political enemies. You would make a splendid addition to the list."

He waved his hand. Stanley gave me a shove toward the door. As I staggered past Wann, he whirled and planted the back of his hand against my nose. I rocked back, seeing stars, positive that he had broken it.

Wo snarled, "Hit the bitch again!"

"No, no," called Laureano. "I don't want her disfigured. Not yet. You can have your fun with her downstairs."

Wann grinned, eyeing my body under the black lace jump suit.

Hands shoved me into the hall, guiding me toward the staircase, down that and along the lower hall to a closed door. Wo stepped past me, unbarred it, then caught my elbow and dragged me onto some steps. A well switch clicked, and a blue radiance sprang to life in the cellar.

The blue light bulbs, cleverly hidden behind glass panels shaped like human bones, were a touch of genius. They added a grisly horror to the sight of the chains and manacles hanging from the stone walls, to the iron maiden, the rack and the wedge as they stood here and there in the dungeon. There was even a small iron cage suspended on a chain from the ceiling in which a prisoner could neither lie down, kneel or sit.

I started shaking three steps from the bottom of the stairs. My girl-girl flesh was covered with goose-bumps. I wanted to scream and scream and scream.

Marcello Laureano had placed lifesize and lifelike dummies on those torture gadgets so that it seemed they were in actual operation at the moment. These dummies were done so cleverly, painted so true to life, that you saw the bleeding flesh ripped open, the bluish skin where joints had been pulled from their sockets, the bulging eyes and open mouths of the persons being savaged.

My knees trembled, so I could hardly stand.

I told myself I couldn't take anything like that. Not for me the iron maiden with its spikes thrusting into my body, as the iron door was slammed shut on my trussed body; not for me the rack that pulled legs and arms apart, slowly and agonizingly, or the wedge that squeezed the foot to a boneless pulp.

"No," I whimpered, almost to myself.

Stanley heard me and giggled. "She doesn't like the rack pack. I think she'll break easily."

"I do not think so," muttered Laureano.

"I hope not," growled Wann.

Marcello Laureano was still fingering his throat, as he brushed past me, walking like a tour guide between his injury instruments. He said, "Most of these gadgets the world is familiar with, Miss Drum. I have a few not many people have heard of, really ingenious refinements on the art of torture."

He sounded pleased as punch. He strode in among some faint shadows of the cellar and lifted a two-inch-thick rope cable with his hand. I could make out bristly hairs and knots sticking up every few inches along it.

"An adaptation from the love swing, for one thing. Ah, I can see you are guessing at its function. Yes. It's for use on naughty girls. And this nipple nipper . . ."

He lifted a hollow aluminum rod equipped with grippers on one end, a plunger at the other. "DeSade would have been proud of me for this. It is very effective. More than one woman has confirmed its efficacy with her screams and pleas for mercy.

"Glance this way, if you will. I call this the heat seat. Come a little closer, please."

Stanley pushed me forward, giggling maniacally, saying, "Oh, we'll have a real good time with this one. Wo and Wann will . . ."

"Wo and Wann would kill her, Stanley. I'm surprised at you. We must be careful with Miss Drum. We don't want to injure her too fast, too soon. Maybe after we toy with her for awhile, after she has told me what I want to know, we'll let the where and when boys have her. But not at first."

The where and when boys were slavering over me,

licking their lips, their pig eyes stripping me naked. Maybe their glances gave Laureano the idea, because he gurgled laughter, waving a hand and saying, "Go ahead, Wo. You too, Wann. I don't want her jump suit to get all bloody."

Hands that were thick with muscle grabbed the black lace on either side of me and tugged. The thin lace split right down to my crotch. My bare breasts bounced out as their tugs yanked me first one way and then the other.

Wo grabbed my waist, lifted me as Wann tore the leggings, ripping them off. He held me as if I were a child. He even shook me back and forth so that my breasts jiggled and my buttocks jellied. His wet lips kissed my buttocks, first one and then the other.

"You'll kill her with kindness, Wo," snapped Stanley.

"I'd like to, me and Wann," the big man growled.

"Later, later," smiled Laureano. "First the heat seat."

They pushed me down into a chair that looked like a potty-seat. Its seat was open so that my privacy was exposed to an electric grille directly under it. From leather thongs, two black leather sacks hung down from the high back. Laureano himself came and slipped those bags over my breasts. A hand pump to one side enabled him to tighten them over my girlish attributes.

Stanley flicked switches.

"Oh God," I breathed.

The leather sacks on my breasts were getting hot. Hidden electrical wires were warming swiftly. And to add to the dull pain of the heat, the sacks began to shrink, pulled inward by hidden wires.

Under the open seat, the electric grille was heating.

Marcello Laureano smiled down at me. "It will be interesting to learn at what degree of heat you will lose

your composure, Miss Drum. Stanley, raise the grille another inch."

"No," I whispered. "No!"

The heat was awful on my most sensitive parts. I thought I could smell burning hair, but that may have been my imagination. At the same time, my breasts were being crushed by the contracting leather sacks, which were damn hot by this time.

"You really know how to—hurt a gal," I sobbed.

Leather straps about my chest, above and below the leather bags, leather straps at my knees and thighs and hips, kept me from squirming more than an inch in any direction. An inch did no good in trying to escape the agony of blistered flesh.

My mouth was open; my eyes were bulging.

I was panting as if for air. My eyes rolled around the room, seeing only the misshapen, tortured bodies of other poor souls who'd been caught by Marcello Laureano. My reason was being affected by the pain, I suppose, because they were no longer dummies, they were real people stretched out and being wrung with agony.

How long I was forced to sit there, I'll never know. Suddenly, when I was about to pass out, hands undid the straps, withdrew the leather sacks and shut off the red-hot grille beneath the open seat. Sobbing, only half conscious, I was lifted and carried.

I was blacking out every few minutes. My body was shuddering with uncontrollable spasms, and the someone I heard whimpering was using my voice. I was raised upward, manacles were fastened about my wrists. I hung like that for a while, as Laureano and his bullyboys talked about me.

"... take too much more. Besides, I have a headache. I'm not fully able to enjoy what we're doing to her."

"Stanley, you're a born sadist. Well, my own throat aches more than a little. Perhaps I should sleep. It's pretty late, well after midnight. Maybe we all need a good night's rest."

"I'm not tired," growled Wo.

"Me neither," added Wann.

"Nevertheless, I think we should call a halt. Oh, all right—the rasp rope if you insist, since she's already strung up."

Hands gripped my ankles, lifted and parted them. My bare feet were laced in leather boots nailed to wooden platforms about three feet apart. My arms were already high apart above my head.

I half-hung, half-stood there, shivering uncontrollably. My breasts were baked, my privacy was roasted, I was a mass of red-hot agony. And these bastards hadn't really begun on me! They were going to call a recess and get some sleep. What were they going to do with me after they slept? Something damn nasty, no doubt.

I opened my pain-bleary eyes.

Wo and Wann were carrying a rope toward me. One end hung on a pulley from the wall in front of me, where it was looped about so it could be made to move steadily from one wall to the other. Where and When were putting the rope between my widespread legs. Then they must have fastened it to a pulley on the wall behind me because the rope jerked upward between my legs, searing me with the bristles set in knots a couple of inches apart. Those bristles were like fine wires.

"Ahhh, ahhh, ahhh," I wailed, shaking my head as realization dawned on me. I tried to shrink from the rasp of those bristles and could not. They dug into my private parts like needles, actually drawing blood.

Laureano was standing below me, still rubbing his

bruised throat. His eyes gloated as they studied my nakedness.

"In the good old days, women used ropes somewhat similar to that as love swings, Miss Drum," he informed me. "Of course, there were no bristles in them; they'd have hurt too much. They had softer fibers in the knot, to tickle attractively just as feathers might tickle.

"My own innovation in the love swing is to make those bristles very stiff, unbending, so that they scratch instead of soothe, torture instead of titillate. An amusing contrivance, is it not?

"But then, I rather imagine you're not in any position to admire my handiwork, at the moment. Wo, go ahead. Start her up."

A motor hummed. The rope began to move slowly.

It burned me; it was like razor blades slashing into my soft flesh. I tried to raise myself up from the platform on which my feet were standing, but the leather boots held firmly. I shook and quivered. I cried out. Cried out? I damn well screamed my fool head off.

Back and forth went that knotted rope, slowly at first and then a little faster, until my head was flung back, and through my open mouth came the most blood curdling screeches I've ever heard. The motor hummed, the rope hummed, and I shrilled out yells that made my hair stand on end.

The rope speeded between my legs now. I'd had all I could endure. I hung in the manacles, my legs sagged, and I was bleeding down my inner thighs. If Laureano hadn't given a signal with his hand, those bristles would have ripped my girl-girl apparatus to bloody shreds.

From a far distance I heard a voice.

"Well, my dear, perhaps you're ready now to answer a few questions. Just a starter, so to speak. We can get to

the troublesome ones a little later. I'd like to know, first of all, where your L.U.S.T. headquarters are. Hmmm?"

My head hung down so that my chin rested on my upper chest. I pretended, even in the agony that made my naked body ripple in spasmodic contortions, that I was unconscious. If Marcello Laureano hadn't been suffering from a bruised throat, I would never have been able to get away with it.

But since he wanted to hit the sack, I rather imagine he was more merciful than he otherwise might have been. He sighed and muttered, "She's fainted. Oh, well. Tomorrow's always another day."

Wo protested in no uncertain terms that, fainting spell or not, he was ready to keep the fun going. "Let me have her for a little while, sir. Just half an hour."

Wann added, "Then me. Seeing her buck naked has got me going."

"You'd kill her, you idiot. I've told you that I want to question her. After I'm through with her tongue, you can have the rest. We'll make it a little orgy, maybe."

His eyes ran over my numb nudity. His chuckle was lewd in the stillness. "I might like some of that, myself."

They freed my feet from the leather boots; they took away the bristly rope; they lowered me to the floor and unfastened my wrists from the manacles. Wo and Wann had to catch me; I would have fallen without support.

"The *oubliette*," Laureano murmured.

They carried me across the cellar floor to a corner of the chamber where a flat round stone lay embedded in the floor. It had an iron ring sunk into its surface. Wo let me go, while he drew a chain from the ceiling and fastened its hook to the iron ring.

A hidden motor hummed; the chain tautened; the flat stone began to rise. All this time Wann was having him-

self a feel day with my naked body. Against my behind, I felt him getting excited. I didn't even have the strength to pull away.

A gaping black hole appeared below the round stone, as it rose upward. In the old days, Cesare Borgia probably kept prisoners down in that black pit to prevent their escape. Marcello Laureano was going to use it for the same purpose.

Wann lifted me. Wo caught my ankles. They lowered me slowly, one clinging to each wrist. Laureano stood close beside me, smiling grimly down at my bruised, bleeding body.

"You can sleep down there, Miss Drum—if you can sleep. Perhaps the cold and the dampness may prove better than my tortures to loosen your tongue. I hope so, for your sake. If you speak freely and willingly, I'll forego the pain for a little pleasure.

"We'll let you be our slavegirl for a few days before we kill you—swiftly and mercifully. If you talk, that is; if you agree to tell me whatever I want to know."

I had no fight left in me. I heard him only dimly. I just sagged there, my wrists prisoned by Where and When, my toes pointing down at the blackness.

"Let her go!" Laureano rasped.

I fell into the darkness.

The *oubliette* was about eight feet deep. My bare feet hit damp slime and skidded. I went down on my butt. Up above my head, I saw Where grinning at me, moments before the round stone was dropped into place. I was alone in Stygian blackness.

I whimpered, putting my hands between my legs and pressing into my tormented body. I shook from the pain of my own touch. I took away my hands and lifted them

to my breasts, cradling their soreness. My body rocked back and forth. Tears came into my eyes and I wept.

There was no escape from this fix.

Marcello Laureano had me good and tight. Tomorrow they would come and lift me out of here, strap me to another of their fiendish torture instruments and have another go at me. They would be refreshed and rested by food and sleep; I would still be in this weakened condition.

I went on weeping, like the scared little girl I was.

Well, Hell! What else was I but a scared little girl? I could not climb the rounded, slime-slicked walls of my prison. Even if I could, I wouldn't be able to budge that heavy stone covering. It needed an electric motor and a chain to do that. I might as well kill myself.

I might have tried that, if there'd been any way to do it. But I was stark naked, and my fingernails weren't strong enough to cut the veins in my wrists. The thought came to me that I could bite them open, if I had to. I told myself I was no quitter; I would stay alive until the last moment.

I was half asleep when I thought about this. My bod had been through a hell of a lot; it clamored for sleep. So I slept, with my head on my knees, my arms about my legs, my back against the slimey wall.

I dreamed I was swimming at the French Riviera. I splashed about laughing, fighting off the advances of Where and When, who changed into sharks and back into men when I screamed enough at them. The water kept getting colder and colder, however, as I swam around.

I woke up with water at my chin. The rest of me was under chilly salt water. I just sat there, dumbfounded. Was this another stunt of Marcello Laureano? Could he look in at me, and had he decided to deprive me of my

sleep? For the first time since he had began working me over, I got angry.

I stood up in the water that was slightly above my calves, almost to my knees. "Damn you to Hell, you lousy bastard!" I screamed.

Then my reason took over. I stood there shaking with cold—that salt water was almost freezing—but my emotions disappeared before a faint spark of intelligence.

How had the water come into the *oubliette*?

I dropped to my knees, put my arms deep in the water and began fumbling around the base of the walls. There had to be an opening down here. I knew it was too much to hope for a crawl space large enough for me to enter, but I was a beggar and not a chooser and hope was all I had left.

My fingers found a grillework through which the salt water was entering. My fingers fumbled over it. The grille covered an opening about eighteen inches by eleven. Not very big, certainly, but far larger than I'd dared hope for. The only trouble was, the opening was covered by the metal grille. I could never get through that grillework the way water could.

I wanted to bawl. The bay waters were surging in here, as they always did when the tide rose. I rather imagined they covered half the height of the *oubliette*—far enough to prevent any prisoners from getting a nice, restful sleep. I told myself that only a man like Casare Borgia could have been responsible for such a cruel touch.

I thought about that for a minute.

If Cesare Borgia had installed that grille, its metal must be damned rusty by this time. I did not think Marcello Laureano had replaced it. I don't think he even knew about the tide rising in this thing. If he had, I felt confi-

dent he'd have mentioned it, if only to increase my mental sufferings.

Or maybe I underestimated him.

There was one sure way to find out. I sat down in the water that was up above my mouth and nose by this time. I slid my fingers between the openwork to get a good grip on the grille. I planted my bare feet on either side of the opening.

I yanked and went over backwards, the grille in my hands.

I gurgled salt water, until I could get my head above water. I looked at the grille. It had snapped off entirely, its metal so eroded that it was little more than paper thin. I drew several lungfuls of air deep inside me. I took in as much as I could hold—and dove.

I slithered my nakedness toward the opening.

Bare metal scratched my hips as I wriggled through.

It was dark in the tiny tunnel. I hoped the hell it didn't narrow up ahead and that I wouldn't get caught in a squeeze and die there, flopping out my life helplessly. But I had no time to do any exploring of the tunnelway. Already my lungs were straining with the need to breathe again.

I could not swim; the passageway was too small to move my arms in a swimming motion. I did give a few kicks with my feet, however; the tunnel was big enough for that. While I was kicking with my feet, my arms were out in front so I could push my way along the slippery walls.

I was going to die down here.

My feminine intuition told me so. The tunnel was too long. I would never be able to negotiate it before I had to breathe. The world record for holding your breath under-

water is thirteen minutes, forty-two and five-tenths seconds—but I was no record holder.

I shook, my lips pressed together. I needed air. Air! I had to breathe or die. Well, then, I would die. I couldn't hold out any longer.

I started to open my mouth.

My left hand felt only water. I waved my right hand. More water. No tunnel wall! I closed my mouth, determined to hang on. I went upward like an arrow. As my head popped out into the night, I opened my mouth and drank in air as if it were the rarest of wines.

It was even better than that.

I paddled about in the water, kicking feebly. Here and there in the background I could make out the dark shapes of fishing smacks and masts standing up against the starry sky. The air was salty with the smell of the Mediterranean, but it was a gorgeous scent in the Drum nostrils.

I managed to swim to a boat. I gripped its moldboard and hung on, letting the strength come back to me. The coldness of the water did one thing in my favor: it numbed my flesh so my breasts and genitals did not ache so much.

I turned my head. I was right below and behind the Borgia house. Its brick rear wall rose upward from the ancient stones of the quay. Its few windows were dark. Everybody in that house was sleeping so they could be fresh and ready for me, come morning. Oh, the bastards!

I began to swim toward the house. I was going back into that house to kill everybody in it, coldly and dispassionately. They thought me safe enough in that damn *oubliette*. They were going to learn how wrong they could be.

I reached for the stone quay and began my climb.

Chapter 7

The front door was unlocked, just as I had left it when I entered it earlier this night. I merely pushed it open and walked in. I knew the house reasonably well by this time and strolled boldly into the darkness.

I had no weapon other than my bare hands, but my opponents would be sleeping pretty soundly. Wo had a broken nose, Wann a might sore head, and Marcello Laureano possessed a throat that would pain him for some time to come. Only Stanley might not be showing any ill effects from the belt on the temple I had given him.

I did not know where Stanley slept, but I guessed it would be the second floor along with Where and When. Maybe they all slept together. That would be the icing on the cake.

I walked forward into the kitchen. I selected a small dish towel, wrapped it about my right hand. Then slid my right hand over a wicked carving knife that had been honed to razor sharpness. I felt a little like Joan of Arc with a sword in her hand, as my feet carried me upstairs.

Snores told me where the bedroom was. I found it in the rear of the house behind the room were Wo and Wann

had been playing *assa piglia tutta*. I went into that room, found two twin beds, one with Where and one with When. I saw no Stanley anywhere.

You make do with what you have in my game. I had the two muscle boys right before me; I would waste no time hunting for Stanley. I tiptoed toward the first bed, my fingers tightening about the knifehandle. I dove its blade forward, straight for Wann's fat throat.

Gaaaahhh!

Blood erupted in a geyser of liquid. It was too dark in the room to see color. Wann began flopping this way and that, the way a chicken does when you chop its head off. I got out of his way, as I leaped for Where.

Wo was sitting up, blinking dazed eyes. I straightened my knife arm and drove for his throat with my point. He never saw me coming. The blade went right through his neck. I had to use force to yank it out.

I stood back and waited, coldly. I was going to make damn sure nobody got me from the rear this time, the way Stanley had done upstairs. I waited and I watched them die.

I went out into the hall.

Stanley had to be gotten rid of before I dared tackle Marcello Laureano. And I felt sure he was somewhere in the house. He wasn't downstairs nor on this floor. That left one place to be.

I went up to the top floor.

My hand touched the doorknob of the rear room, the bedroom where Marcello Laureano slept. There was a trundle bed on the floor, close beside the door I was opening. Stanley was sleeping in the trundle bed, his hand wrapped around a revolver.

Stanley the watchdog. I grinned as I leaned forward and chopped down with the knifeblade, at the same time

reaching for the Smith and Wesson .45 he was packing. I didn't want a shot to wake Laureano. I had a special way for him to die. Remember, I needed his heart.

As the knife sank in, Stanley instinctively lifted his hands. I wrenched the gun away from him at that point, for fear it might go off and wake my next victim. I knelt on the trundle bed and watched Stanley die, his horrified, disbelieving eyes taking in my face and naked body.

He tried to speak and could not. His throat had been all but cut in two. I put my palm on his forehead and pushed him back. He lay there and died in little spasms.

I left the knife where it was with the blood-drenched towel around it. No fingerprints to show. Let the *polizza* puzzle over that one.

Naked, I walked to the bed where Laureano slept. I reached for a pillow. He was snoring, his whole body shuddering with each intake of breath. I lifted the pillow in both hands and brought it down across his face.

The snoring stopped. His body came alive.

I pressed down harder. His hands caught my wrists, but he was no muscleman like Wo. His fingers tightened, held me for a little while, as his body flopped across the bed. I gritted my teeth and held on.

I was not only killing an ex-Nazi who wanted to bring Nazism back to Germany, I was saving the life of Giuseppe Vico. Because this man was, ironically enough, going to give life to Joey Joy so that he could identify the third and last of his neo-Nazi fellows.

After a time, the floppings stopped.

I held the pillow down another few minutes, then reached for his chest. No heart beat. I had to work fast. I got a shoulder under his hip. I hefted him up. He was no lightweight, but neither was Francesco Biletti. I staggered toward the window.

The window overlooked the bay waters.

I raised the window and slid a leg over the sill. It was a tight squeeze getting both of us through the window opening, but I made it. Then I just leaned sideways and let go.

We made a splash loud enough to endanger the sonic barrier, it seemed. But when I surfaced with my dead body, nobody paid any attention. I used the lifesaving grip to get my prey to the quay stones.

I walked through the Neapolitan streets with Marcello Laureano slung over a shoulder. If I had met anyone, I would have explained that my boy friend and I had gone swimming, and that he had fainted in the cold water. Luckily, I met no one.

I shoved the carcass in the *Maserati Ghibli*, revved up the engine and headed for L.U.S.T. headquarters. I drove through empty streets; only once did I catch sight of any sign of life, when a milkwagon trundled along a side street.

The garage doors opened at my honk. I drove my dead man into the safety of four friendly walls, slipped my bare body into a coverall and gave my report. Within minutes, a L.U.S.T. despatcher had Doctor Ernesto Vicelli on the phone, then my villa, alerting Caterina to the fact that an ambulance would pick Giuseppe Vico up in half an hour.

A L.U.S.T. car would roll the dead man to the hospital, where Doctor Vicelli would be ready to remove his heart and insert it in the chest cavity of Giuseppe Vico. Renowned surgeons have agreed that the heart transplant is a simple operation compared to the more complex one of trying to do repair work inside a damaged heart.

One great fear of any heart transplant operation is the rejection factor. The living body sometimes attacks transplanted tissues, such as a heart, as healthy blood cells

attack diseased ones. Drugs are used to counteract this bodily immunosuppression.

It was a tough course to run, but we had no other choice. Without a heart transplant in him, Giuseppe Vico would die. A new heart might be all he needed for several more years of life.

I waited until arrangements were made, then went upstairs to a bedroom. I was pooped. You know it, man. Let the rest of the world carry on without me for about eight or nine hours.

Actually, it was ten and half hours before I opened the old eyelids. It was bordering on four in the afternoon when I pulled the wake-up bit. First thing I did was reach for a telephone.

Doctor Vicelli was as happy as a boy with a new pet. "He's doing fine, better than I could have reasonably expected. No sign of rejection. He's sleeping soundly with a nurse at his side for every hour of the day and night."

"Bill me for everything, doctor," I told him. I still had most of that million dollars, and what better use could I put it to? Then I asked, "How soon can I see him?"

"Oh, not for a couple of days at the soonest. I'll let you know. He mustn't be excited, nothing like that."

"Right. I needed a rest anyhow. And I should stop eating all that rich food he prepares."

I cradled the phone and snuggled back in my warm, toasty bed. Two down, one to go. The only difficulty was, I had no idea where to find *numero tre*. And without the help of Joey, Joy, my search would be a fruitless one.

One of our L.U.S.T. agents drove to the villa and brought me back some clothes. I spent a couple of days in Naples, shopping around for abstract-print beach dresses by Marucelli of Milan, for Falcanetto knit suits, for Fabiani cocktail gowns. I added Pucci jump suits to

replace the one Wo and Wann had torn off me, even gold at-home pajamas by Simonetta, and some Baldini bra and panty sets that would knock a hermit's eye out.

I bought myself a couple of hand-blocked beach coats by Scarebocchio and a few mini-bikinis by Glans of Milan. I felt it my duty to treat myself to these goodies, because otherwise I had a hell of a lot of money I didn't know what to do with. And besides, I had to maintain an image.

While in Naples, I figured I might as well go to Capri. I had to wait until Giuseppe Vico got better before we could look at those movies Nerina Posilippo had made the night of the orgy, the same night I'd killed Luisa Geraci and Enzo Carrara. I might as well have fun and forget my work. I told myself I'd go back to the job with a fresher mind.

So I phoned a real estate agent. I told him I wanted a suite of rooms somewhere on the island and was willing to pay top prices. Money can do anything. In half an hour he was calling back. He had a small suite available for two weeks at a rental of a million lira the week. Sixteen hundred bucks, American. For one week!

My frugal little soul damn near died.

"I'll take it," I said, gulping. I could imagine what David Anderjanian would say when he went over my expense account. My excuse would be that I needed a rest to comfort my tortured girl-girl body.

So I took all my new clothes in some brand new luggage and crossed the Bay of Naples to Capri. I set up housekeeping in the suite—later I learned it was rented by an impoverished Italian nobleman to whom my million lire would be a windfall, so I felt better about things—and then I went for a stroll in a Falcanetto print shirt and matching skirt.

I drew a number of wolf whistles, as I expected to, and a stare from a familiar face, which I did not. I waved a friendly hand at Paolo Uffenti.

"Where's Veronica?" I asked.

The last time I had seen Paolo Uffenti, he'd been running into the shadows of my patio villa with the Argentine woman, Veronica Ozaca. He was a slim, handsome youth with curly black hair above an olive face. His profile would have put that of a Greek god to shame.

He smiled, showing very white teeth. "The signora Ozaca is indisposed, so I thought I would take a little vacation. I was born on Capri. Sometimes I come here to sop up familiar scenes and relive old memories."

"I've never been on Capri before," I confessed.

"*Excellenza!* If you permit, I will be your guide." He hesitated, then admitted that he had no money. "And it costs money to see the sights here, where almost everybody has a title—or at least a million dollars."

I patted his bare arm. "I have the money. You can earn yourself a little bonus if you do a good job."

He was very pleased at this and insisted that we should take a *sandalino*, a sort of flat-bottomed rowboat shaped like an Eskimo kayak, with pointed prow and stern, and go visit the blue grotto.

I nixed that, because I wanted to swim when I saw the *grotto azzurro*. We compromised on a walk through the piazza, making plans for the evening. There would be dining on the terrace of the Hotel Cesare Augusto, following which we would visit the Number Two Club. Tomorrow we would go swimming and visit the grotto.

He was to pick me up at eight.

I was in my new Baldini panties and bra, when his voice told me he was coming up the stairs. I didn't think anything of greeting him in those scanty bits of fluff; he'd

seen just as much of my hide at the villa pool or at the orgy, where he'd run off with Veronica Ozaca.

To my surprise, he never even looked.

His smile was pasted on his lips; his black eyes looked into mine. He never let his stare depart from my face. I was a little miffed and told myself I was losing my grip. As he seated himself, reaching into a solid gold cigarette case for a cigarette, I walked back to my bedroom, wagging my buttocks.

Maybe the boy was shy. My eyes watched his reflection in a wall mirror. He was staring, out the French windows and over the little balcony that was part of my suite of rooms, at sunset on the bay.

I was determined to get some response from him, so I wore a mini-skirted Fabiani cocktail gown that showed my legs to good advantage, and a pair of Dal Co Roman sandals. I don't think he saw me, really; he rose at my grand entrance, made a little bow, and lead the way downstairs.

Capri is only four square miles of sunbleached rock, seventeen miles from Naples. Everyone walks on Capri—or rides a little donkey. I didn't dig the donkey bit, so we strolled to the Cesare Augusto.

From the hotel terrace, adorned by the white marble statue of the emperor after which the hotel is named, you can look across the bay toward Naples or out at the Mediterranean Sea. The sea breeze was gentle, caressing. The Caprisi claim their air is the finest in the world, that you get no hangovers after a night on the town, and that you don't require as much sleep when your lungs fill up with their own special brand of oxygen. Maybe so. I never had a hangover, and I didn't get much sleep while I was there.

We dined on black truffle hors d'oeuvres, on veal cut-

lets *scheggino*, that were made with truffles as an ingredient, and finished up with crepes suzettes. I mentioned the truffles because they are supposed to be an aphrodisiac.

They were with me—or maybe it was my feminine pride stirring my libido into action. I cooed and gurgled at my dinner partner, but I might as well have been an Airedale for all the good it did me.

Maybe he was faithful to his Argentine mistress.

It became a game after a time. When I would pat his hand and lean closer so he could see down the bodice of my dress, he would withdraw his hand and turn away his eyes. My knee, as it pressed into his, was deftly avoided after the first time. I was striking out in the love league, that was for sure.

Something like that does things to a girl, it rattled me. I was determined to have some effect on him. So when we tripped our way to the Number Two Club and drank sazeracs together, I inched my hips closer to his, until I pinned him in a corner and he couldn't get away.

So he suggested we dance.

He kept himself at arm's length during the more intimate music. For the bugaloo and the fish he hurled himself into a body-rocking rhythm that would have drawn raves at the Electric Circus.

When he said good night at the door of my apartment, he kissed my cheek. My *cheek!* Like I was his old maid aunt or something. Cheeeesh!

Next day I wore a mini-bikini. They call it the Riviera bikini on this side of the Atlantic, and it makes the American bikini look like a shirt and rompers. My bare belly protruded; so did a few golden hairs of my privacy. He could see my tanned legs from red toeneails to the bulges of my all-but naked buttocks. My breasts were

barely covered —and I mean barely. Paulo Uffenti paid me no never mind. He chatted, he laughed, he gossiped, but he did not make a play for me. I began to wonder if he was alive.

The whole situation was getting me down.

We rowed a sandolino out across the bay waters to the blue grotto. Inside the grotto the waters are a deep, rich azure. We moved into the cavern through a small opening low in its wall and let the boat glide silently through the waters. I was silent, awed.

Then Paolo suggested we row far out of sight of land and go skinny-dipping. He did not use the American term; he suggested we swim *au naturelle*. I was all for it. I wanted to see this boy stripped to his fundamentals. I didn't think he was a man.

He had been wearing a blue and white striped jersey and a pair of hip-hugging chinos. When we were a couple of miles out to sea, he shipped the oars, stood up, and lifted the jersey over his head. He had a deep chest; his torso was muscled so that it looked like an old-fashioned washboard. Inserting his thumbs in his chinos, he pushed them and his boxer shorts down.

I gulped. He was a Roman god, and I mean Priapus. The normal European male organ is roughly six to six and one half inches in length when erected. The Arab and the Negroid boast a slightly larger apparatus; the Hindus and Japanese a somewhat smaller. However, there are exceptions in every ethnological grouping, and my boy here was one of them.

Paolo Uffenti must have measured six inches—flaccid. When erected, he would be close to eight.

He poised a moment on the moldboard of the boat, then dove. I had sat there staring at his nakedness, telling myself that there damn well was something wrong with

my sex appeal, because Paolo Uffenti was a man. A man-man, as a matter of fact. A man-man I wanted, if only to soothe my female pride, because he was totally indifferent to my charms.

I got up, I slipped out of the tiny halter and almost non-existent pants of my Riviera bikini. I stepped to the moldboard and dove in.

Maybe we would be able to play some games this far out to sea. As I dove through the water, I could make out the white form of my companion a few yards away. I swam underwater toward him.

He must have seen me coming. He swam off in a different direction. I grated my teeth, thinking, Damn you! I'll get you for this. I surfaced and floated around, sopping up the warm sunshine, letting my body pores revel in the cool waters.

"Miss Drum—*aiuto! Aiuto!*"

Paolo was floundering around in the water, arms waving, splashing. He was near the sandalino, but he was so terrified, he didn't see it. I swam toward him, calling out for him to be calm.

I was within hand-reach of him, when he opened his mouth, snapped it shut, and sank. I started to dive, when his head banged mine, and with the desperate strength of the frightened swimmer, his muscular arms closed around me in a bearhug.

We sank straight down.

A drowning man clutches at anything in his desire to stay alive. Paolo Uffenti was clutching me like I was a life preserver. At the moment I was anything but, because there wasn't much air in my lungs, and his grip was squeezing out what air there was. His arms held my arms to my sides.

I hated to do it but—

My knee came up between his legs.

He doubled up in pain. I got a lock on his arm and shoulder and kicked upwards. We broke the surface. I gulped in air and began the same sort of life-saving swim I'd used on Marcello Laureano. I held his hair, maintaining his floating position beside the boat, while I climbed in.

Then I bent over, and with much wriggling of my backside and by straining my legs and arms, I got him into the sandalino. Water spewed from his loose lips, as his eyes rolled in his head.

I flipped him over, belly-down on the slatted boards of the boat, and rested his cheek on his right forearm. Then I straddled his hips and, planting my palms on his ribs, began to give him artificial respiration.

It took about ten minutes, but he came around.

During those ten minutes, I'd been sitting on his hard buttocks with my golden privacy, and the rubbing and chafing reminded me I was a naked girl with a naked man, all alone on the Mediterranean Sea.

When he gurgled and gasped, lifting his head and looking around him, I got off him. He turned over. His limpness was a thing of the past; his manhood was a proud lance lifting skyward.

I gaped in delighted surprise. "Well, well! Maybe I've been using the wrong tactics."

He flushed, looked around for something to cover him.

I knelt down, letting my breasts dangle. I brushed my nipples back and forth across him where he was tuned in. His gasp was loud.

"What is it? You a masochist? You have to be beaten up or in danger to react?" I wondered softly.

"No, no," he said hoarsely. "It's nothing like that. I . . ."

"Ssssh," I breathed. "Don't speak."

His head fell back. He was resting on his behind and his elbows, as I took him between my pallid breasts, crushing them to him with my hands. His breath got shorter, louder. Some men go for the mammaeism bit, where female breasts perform the function of the genitals.

When he began to groan, I slid away and got to my feet. I would have preferred our union to be more private, but a quick glance around showed me we were all alone. I squatted down, gripping him gently, and slid into the St. George position, which was favored by Lysidice in her mounted worship of the goddess Venus.

My hips rotated slowly, then did a hula. I slowed down when his mouth opened, and he strained upward in a reflex action. To my surprise, his eyes were closed. Most men would have been eyeballing my bouncing breasts at a time like this or watching my belly fill and empty to my rhythmic contractions. Not Paolo. I think he was visualizing Veronica Ozaca at the moment, which made me more than a little annoyed.

So I took my time, determined to get some sort of favoring reaction from him, a cry of thanks or a grunt of sheer rut. He was like a male dummy, one of those sex simulacrums you can buy in certain corners of the world if you know the stores in which to shop.

I felt as if I were doing a solo bit.

Then I began using my *constrictor cunni* muscles, which every woman has, even if she doesn't use them. I gripped him internally, as the *qebbadzeh* women of the Arabs grips her man, earning for herself the name of 'holder woman.' In India, they term such females, *vadha-vakha*, and her grip on the male organ, *el-imsak*.

As a result of this coital clutch, a man is enabled to prolong his part in the goody game. Paolo Uffenti was red

in the face; his teeth were grating together; he was trying to force the issue between us and be done with it (I assumed), but I kept him going like an automaton.

My own response was nothing short of sensational. I spasmed and bucked, my face contorted with the orgasmic enjoyment. My tender sex nerves stood on end and danced. I wailed my pleasure into the warm Mediterranean air. I shrieked my delight to the skies. My thighs tensed and tightened about his middle, again and again.

At length, I relented. I went to work to churn him into a fulfillment. His body came off the slatted boards. He touched only at his heels and the back of his head in that pleasure which is so akin to agony. I rode him as Octavia once rode Rangoni, until he bellowed out his bull pleasure. sure.

He collapsed and lay there, a sullen pout on his lips. "You didn't have to do that. It wasn't necessary."

"You're so sexy, Paolo," I smiled. "How do you and Veronica get your kicks?"

He kicked a bare foot at an oarblade lying against the side of the boat, muttering, "We have our ways."

"Good, I'm glad you're a little human. Come on, tell me about them. Maybe I can learn something."

I doubted that he could teach me anything. They call me Oh Oh Sex at L.U.S.T. headquarters, not without good reason. I have studied the sex books of the world, the *Kama Sutra*, the *Ananga Ranga*, the *Eroticka Biblion*, the *Nouvelle Album Erotique* and various other publications dealing with the arts of Venus.

I have tested and tried the more or less ordinary thirty-six positions of love that are mentioned by world erotologists but not some of the more extreme ones, which are kooky adaptations of the real thing. The illustrations of the *Monumentes du Culte Secret des Dames*

Romanines, of the *Monuments da la Vie Privée des a Douze Cesars*, the collections of the Gichner Foundation, and such volumes as *Roma Amor*, *Eros Kalos*, *Checan* and the *Sarv e Nez* have been like pussycat primers to me.

But I was always willing to learn.

Paolo Uffenti pulled on his chinos, as if to hide himself from my view. I grinned and sat in front of him on the stern with my legs wide open. He did not look at me once. I thought I was getting to know Paolo. He needed stimulation of a certain kind to be effective.

If I'd had him for half an hour in Marcello Laureano's torture dungeon, I'd have had him begging. I'll bet. I wondered if it was worth a try in my suite of rooms, come the night.

I decided it wasn't worth it. There were hundreds of young men on Capri I could have without all that rigamarole, if I wanted. Paolo Uffenti was handsome, amusing and entertaining, but he was no Casanova. We were scarcely speaking when the sandolino butted the quay a little before dusk. I felt as if I'd raped a virgin boy.

I walked alone to my suite.

Paolo Uffenti busied himself paying off the boatman who rented the sandolinos with the money I had given him. He did not keep his date for supper at the Quisisana; he did not come to take me swimming next day. I asked around and learned he had fled back to the mainland.

Oh, well. It wasn't too much of a loss.

I contented myself with swimming from a boat close to the pebbly beaches of Capri, with lazing in the sun my mini-bikini and getting my pelt tanned a golden brown. The beaches of the island are rather stony, so most

everybody goes swimming from a boat in one of the little coves that dot the rocky shoreline.

If you are a voyeur it can be a paradise, because sometimes a couple will so forget themselves as to indulge in a bit of *guerre amoureuse* in the brilliant sunshine without regard for who might see them. The Capresi live a gay and happy life, unattended by guilt complexes. And after you are there a couple of days, the atmosphere gets to you.

Like at the Taboo, where the unattached females go. You want a male, you go there in your fancy clothes or even in your sloppy ones. There are all types at the Taboo. I went there, three nights after Paolo Uffenti had abandoned me, for a quick drink. I stayed until dawn, enjoying the fun.

I had half a dozen offers of male companionship for the evening, but I turned them all down. My fiasco with Paolo Uffenti still bother me, I guess. Of a sudden, Capri grated on my nerves.

Next morning, fifteen minutes after I woke up, I was packing my things to go home to the villa. Call it intuition or a sense of duty, I had myself a guilty conscience.

My session with Paolo Uffenti had convinced me I was all girl again, with no traces left of my torture troubles in the Cesare Borgia house. It was time to go back to work. I would find out how Giuseppe Vico was, whether I could visit him, and would resume my search for any clues Penny Madden might have hidden away.

If they were there; I would find them.

It was late afternoon when I rolled onto the villa grounds in my *Maserati Ghibli*. Caterina greeted me at the front door, assuring me that Joey Joy was still alive and doing well. The doctor had phoned, saying I could visit him tomorrow and stay an hour.

I ate a frugal meal of eggs benedict, got into my gold lamé lounging pyjamas, and began my search all over again. I went through dusty closets. I sat down in the library and went through book after book after . . .

Hold it! I was staring at the *Odyssey*, the book by Homer about Ulysses, when it hit me. Ulysses was the Greek king of Ithaca, who'd gone off to the Trojan War to get back Helen of Troy for her husband, Menelaus. After that ten year siege was over, he'd set off on a sailing expedition that took up another ten years. Ulysses had a wife named Penelope.

Penelope was a dish, I gather, because a whole truckload of suitors was pushing her to get re-married, claiming Ulysses was dead. To put them off, Penelope wove a blanket during the day and pulled out its strings by night, so it never got finished and . . .

"Holy jumping jackrabbits!" I screeched.

The weaving was there, the way I'd left it last time I'd been staring at the damn thing. I stared at it some more, and gradually the weaving pattern began to make sense. I ran for a notebook and began de-coding what I thought I was seeing.

At the end of two hours, I had a list of names and addresses:

Heinrich Mueller: the Damiani villa
Hans Koenig: #346 Strada della Marinello
Wolfgang Oehler: 1714 Via Salustiana, Rome

I stared in sheer disbelief. Two of the list were eliminated. But—Wolfgang Oehler? Living on the Via Salustiana in Rome? How had Penny found him, when I could not?

No matter. It was my job to fetch him and I meant to do it. I wouldn't need old Giuseppe after all.

This time, I wasn't going to fool around. I got out suction discs from my working kit, a spring-propelled dart gun that fired needles tipped with fast-working knock-out goo, my Belgian Bulldog, even a hand grenade. One way or the other, I was going to finish off the last ex-Nazi tonight if it killed me.

That's a no-no, Eve! Don't even consider getting killed. Positive thinking, that's the thing.

It was mid-afternoon when I hit the *Autostrada del Sole*, the sleek highway that runs from Salerno, through Naples and Rome, and as far as Milan. They call it the Superhighway of the Sun, and I sped along it at a comfortable eighty miles an hour.

It was after midnight when I decided it was safe to make my climb up the building wall that would let me into the third floor apartment of Wolfgang Oehler. Suction discs on knees and elbows holding firmly, I went up that wall like a human fly. I slid a thin strip of steel between the window frames to undo the lock. I raised the window and slid inside.

I found myself in a bedroom. I lifted out a tiny flashlight that shines blue light, which is not disturbing to a sleeper but which lets eyes accustomed to darkness, as mine were, see all that's necessary.

Paolo Uffenti was sleeping like a baby in the brass bed. I goggled a little at the sight of him; I hadn't realized he was one of the ex-Nazi crowd. Obviously, he was too young to be Wolfgang Oehler, so I tiptoed on about my business.

In the other bedroom, I stared down at Veronica Ozaca. She was sleeping quietly, long-lashed eyelids clamped shut, breasts barely stirring in her thin nylon nightgown. I left her and went down the hall to peep into the living room and the kitchen. I pushed a door curtain

out of the way so I could study the small library. No sign of Wolfgang Oehler. Had Penelope Madden made a boo-boo? Or had somebody sold her a fake bill of goods?

I turned back into the hall.

Veronica Ozaca was standing there, a revolver in her hand. She looked half-asleep, but her hand was reaching for the light switch. All she had on under the thin nylon was a pair of panties.

"Don't move or I'll shoot," she exclaimed.

Dopey me! I moved.

Chapter 8

I tore the door-hanging from its rod in a swirl of flying brocade, flinging it ahead of me as a distraction. At the same time I left my feet in a dive for the lady from Argentina.

She fired. Something red-hot hit my shoulder.

My body banged into her knees, driving her back against the wall. My hand flailed up, edge-first, belting her across the nose. She must have seen the whole Milky Way, because her knees sagged, and she started slipping floorwards. I doubled up my first and belted her in the solar plexus. I could actually hear the breath whoosh out of her lungs.

I grabbed up her gun and fled.

Paolo Uffenti picked that time to stick his head out his bedroom doorway. "Whazzzup?" he managed to say, before my left foot lifted into his crotch with a well-aimed kick.

He screamed like a girl and fell backwards.

I ran for the open window, slammed my suction discs into place, and went down the wall like an elevator out of control. As my toes touched the sidewalk pavings, I ran for the *Maserati Ghibli*.

I was on the *Autostrada del Sol* south at ninety miles an hour in ten minutes. I was not worried that Veronica Ozaca might have recognized me in the hallway, the light had been very dim and she had been half asleep. But when she told Wolfgang Oehler what had happened, the ex-Nazi would know I was no cat burglar.

He might even try to even up the score by picking me out as the L.U.S.T. agent who had kidnapped Francesco Biletti and killed Marcello Laureano, his buddies. There would be other hired killers beside Enzo Carrara in Italy to hire for a job.

It might make good sense for me to hide out.

I had a ready-made excuse. The wound in my left shoulder smarted like hell. I could feel wet blood oozing, and the pain made me grit my teeth. But I kept on driving. I had to reach L.U.S.T. headquarters in Naples and let the boys take care of me.

After a time the pain lessened and the bleeding stopped. Maybe I was in shock. I had no way of knowing, my every sense was concentrated on my driving. The miles whipped away—my *Maserati Ghibli* is capable of doing a hundred and seventy miles an hour—and I had my eyes out for *polizza*.

I turned off the *Autostrada* a few minutes more than two hours later. I headed for my L.U.S.T. crowd and managed to honk the horn for attention, before I sagged forward over the steering wheel in a dead faint.

Doctor Vicelli was bending over me, tying a bandage on my shoulder, when I opened my eyes. I was naked to my navel on a bed, as a bit of gauze and cotton was being plastered down with white adhesive tape.

"I'm scarred for life," I moaned. "How bad is it?"

He grinned, showing even white teeth. A recapping job, I decided, staring up at him. Enrico Vicelli was a

handsome man; he would have a clientele of rich widows and ditto married women. Good teeth were an essential to his bedside manner.

"A mere flesh wound," he pooh-poohed. "Painful, yes. You've lost some blood. But Vicelli will see to it that your skin is as perfect after the bandage comes off as before."

He bent and kissed my left breast. Did I mention bedside manners? This boy was the Don Juan of the doctor set. His right hand patted my bare side. His glittering eyes told me he found my mammary globes absolutely delectable.

"How's Giuseppe Vico?" I asked, to change the subject.

"Coming along beautifully. By the time you're up and about, in a day or two, you can spend as much as two hours with him."

"Will he be able to look at movies?"

Doctor Vicelli frowned in puzzlement. Then he smiled. "Aha! The blue movies! Hmmmm. It would be better if he were not sexually stimulated right now. I do not think his new heart could stand it. I shall be happy to volunteer if you have the need to look at stag films."

I giggled. "Sorry, doc. Maybe some other time. My movies are something else entirely."

He looked disappointed, shrugging slightly. "*Scusi. Ho perso la testa.* I just got carried away."

I patted his hand. "Maybe another time."

He went away; I went back to sleep.

Two days later, in a simple ivory A-line dress with coin belt at my middle, I visited Giuseppe Vico in his private hospital room. I'd brought Nerina Posilippo along to work the projector. We set up the small screen. Nerina

threaded the films, and we sat back to watch the pussycat play.

These were the films of the orgy. We saw Paolo Uffenti pinch and then pat the soft white buttocks Veronica Ozaca was showing in her backless nun's costume. They threw loving glances at one another, then ran for the patio and privacy. Remembering how Paolo Uffenti had been so reluctant for an hour or so of zig-zig with me—and I think I can give the Argentine woman aces and spades in sex appeal—I grew curious.

I said, "She was at the house last night, when I went to find Wolfgang Oehler. So was that Uffenti character."

Giuseppe said softly, so as not to strain his body with its new heart, "I haven't paid much attention to her. I've been watching the men."

"Back up and run it again, honey," I told Nerina.

Giuseppe stared at Veronica Ozaca. I thought there might be excitement in his voice as he whispered, "Again! Again! In slow motion, if you can. I want to see the way she turned her head."

We ran the film three times.

Joey Joy was puzzled. "It cannot be. It is impossible. I would like to see other shots of her, if I may."

"What've you got in mind?" I asked, as Nerina prepared the projector with films of the poolside party that showed the Argentine woman in a bathing suit.

Giuseppe only shook his head. "I cannot say. It may be nothing. And yet—let me look at the films."

Nerina ran the poolside films five times for him. Then he waved his hand and let his head sink back into the three pillows that propped him up.

"I never dreamed it was so," he breathed. "Veronica Ozaca is Wolfgang Oehler. I always believed *she* was a man. I never thought his Nazi uniform hid a woman."

"Maybe it didn't," I muttered slowly. "A lot of those Nazis were homos. If Oehler was gay, what better disguise could he have had than to change his very sex?"

Nerina Posilippo gaped at me disbelievingly.

"Remember the operation performed on Christine Jorgensen? It was an innovation at the time. Since then, these transsexual operations are almost a commonplace in Copenhagen. Injections of estrogen help reduce the hairs on the male bodies, soften the skin textures and make them more feminine. These operations, as I understand them, actually remove the genitals of the man and form an artificial vagina within his body."

I wondered if Wolfgang Oehler had gone that far. I remembered I'd never seen Veronica Ozaca unless her hips were covered, by a bathing suit, by her nun's costume the night of the orgy, and by panties under her nightgown, when I'd visited the house on the Via Salustiana. Maybe she still retained her male apparatus.

If so, this would explain Paolo Uffenti.

He was a homosexual. He had not reacted to me as would a normal male. He was hung up on Veronica Ozaca because she had been a man or was still a man. I felt a little sorry for the boy; he was caught between worlds and was spinning like a compass needle under the influence of a magnet.

Giuseppe was saying, "Oehler used to turn his neck in an odd way because of a bullet wound he had taken in a hunting accident when he was a young man. He also had a pronounced swaying motion to his hips as he walked. Effeminate. He tried to control it, but I've seen it often enough to recognize it when he was Veronica Ozaca."

I held up my hand to make him stop talking. "You've said enough. You've given me the answer I wanted. Rest, now. Come on, Nerina. Let's blow."

We packed our movie equipment and stepped out into the hall. I glanced back at Giuseppe Vico, just before I closed the door. He was sound asleep. I hoped his new heart would help him, that he would survive the operation.

I sent Nerina back to the villa in a taxi with the projector and film cans and screen. I was going to drive to Rome. Before I hit the *Autostrada*, I made a phone call to the apartment where two Israeli Intelligence agents lived. I told them to meet me at the house on the *Via Salustiana*.

When he went to the Ozaca apartment, nobody answered our knocks. I got out a blued steel pick and unlocked the door. The apartment was empty.

One of the Israeli agents asked what should they do now? I said, "The one we're after lives in Argentina. Maybe he's gone home."

They volunteered to check the airport and to let me know. I drove back to Naples and went to bed. I was exhausted.

Next day, a little past noon, one of the Israeli agents phoned. They'd checked the Rome airport, discovering that Veronica Ozaca and Paolo Uffenti had left on the 3:15 Alitalia flight to London on the first leg of her flight to Buenos Aires.

As soon as I'd hung up, I dialed the Leonardo da Vinci airport and made arrangements to fly to London, New York, Rio de Janiero and Buenos Aires. I had one thing going for me. If Veronica Ozaca and Paolo Uffenti had not bothered to change their names at the Rome airport registry desk, they might not do so in Buenos Aires.

I readied a cablegram for David Anderjanian to let him know I was still on the job. I worded it in baseball terms.

Struck out two of them; am readying a fastball for the third.

*Love,
Eve*

My flight to London was delayed an hour, but I didn't fret. My victim wasn't going any place. Buenos Aires was his home port, and all I had to do was search around until I found him.

From Rome to London via British Overseas Air Craft, from London to New York in a Transworld 707, and then on to Buenos Aires by way of Rio de Janeiro in a Pan American jetliner. This latter non-stop flight ended in Montevideo, from which city it was only a two and a half hour ride to Buenos Aires.

I had never been to Argentina before. I had always connected it with South American cowboys called gauchos and with those wide stretches of grassland called the pampas. I knew there was a city named Buenos Aires, but I was not prepared for its magnificence. Its European atmosphere, its aura of richness was like something dreamed about, yet never seen.

I had reservations at the posh Plaza on the *Plaza San Martin*, quite centrally located in downtown Buenos Aires. It is the patriarch of Argentinian hotels, and a place you can be proud to name as your stopping place. Its two bars are world famous, in case you like a cocktail before, after or during dinner.

Two minutes after I was in my room, I had a private detective agency on the phone. I was explaining in as fluent Spanish as I could muster that I wanted to know where a man called Paolo Uffenti was staying. I said he

was my cousin from Italy on a visit, and that I wanted to surprise him.

I offered to double the fee if they reported back to me by tomorrow evening. The man on the other end said he would certainly phone me by six tomorrow evening, unless my quarry had changed his name.

I figured that by finding Paolo Uffenti, I would surely run into Veronica Ozaca. I stripped to my pink pelt and immersed myself in a hot tub. Then I laid down and went to sleep.

I did not wake until eight the next morning. I ate a breakfast of scrambled eggs, toast and coffee, then slipped a bikini on under my dress and took a taxi to *Mar del Plata* to go for a swim on its wide, fashionable beach.

I rented a *carpas*, a kind of tentlike cabana fitted out with chairs and a small table, and prepared to enjoy myself. I put the dress and my valuables into my handbag and placed them in a locker.

Then I slopped Coppertone over my skin and sunbathed for a couple of hours. A few local Romeos gave me the eye, but I was a real priss for the moment. I was on a job, and I didn't want to be interrupted by sex rearing its head.

At quarter to five, I was back in my hotel room, admiring my body which was completely tanned except for the white area about my nipples and the equally pale section where my bikini panties had more or less covered me. I was still admiring myself when the telephone rang.

It was my private detective.

"We are in luck, senorita. Your cousin Paolo Uffenti is staying at an apartment house on the outskirts of the *Barrio Norte*. The *Barrio Norte* is an excellent residential spot, where only the rich can afford to live. Your cousin must have plenty of money."

"He's well off," I admitted cautiously.

"Bueno, bueno," the voice chuckled. "You may be interested to know he is living with a woman. Eh?"

"A Miss Ozaca? Veronica Ozaca?"

The voice sounded disappointed. "You know her? Ah, well. That is good. I am not relaying scandal, then."

"Not at all," I caroled cheerfully. "Why don't you come over and get your fee? Doubled, I believe I said?"

"I will be over instantly, *senorita*!"

Less than twenty minutes later, there was a knock on the door. I went to answer it, having covered my curves with a lounging robe by Simonetta. A young man in his twenties was standing there, smiling happily.

His eyes widened as they took in the shape of robe could not hide. I guess he saw the way my breasts wobbled and the buttock-jounce that showed itself when I turned and walked ahead of him into the room to get my handbag.

He entered and closed the door.

As I unsnapped my alligator Coblenz, I studied the young man. He seemed strong and athletic. I got the idea he could handle himself in a pinch. I fumbled with some bills.

"I may need your personal services while I'm here," I told him, "so I'm going to triple your fee."

His smile threatened to split his cheeks, as he accepted several handfuls of American twenty dollar bills. What I know about Buenos Aires I could print on a postage stamp. This healthy specimen knew his home town back-side front. I could use somebody like that in a crisis.

After I paid him his fee, I said thoughtfully, "For your retainer fee I'll pay you—er—I didn't quite catch your name?"

"Ramon, *senorita*. Ramon Garay."

"You drive a car? You know the city?"

He bowed, clicking his heels. "I am a portino, senorita. A port dweller, a native of Buenos Aires."

"I'll pay you a hundred dollars a day," I smiled.

He looked as if he would faint. I giggled. "It may be I'll only need you a day, two days, or two weeks. I just don't know."

"I am yours for how ever long it shall be."

We made arrangements for him to drive me to the apartment house where Paolo Uffenti lived with Veronica Ozaca. He would stay in the car, while I went upstairs and visited my "cousin." I didn't know what I expected to find. I was playing this off the top of my skull.

One thing I did not want. I did not want them to know I was within a thousand miles of Buenos Aires. So I told Ramon to come back at eight o'clock, that I'd be ready then.

"I'm going to surprise my cousin," I simpered. "I'm going to a beauty shop and buy myself a wig. So don't you be surprised if I look different."

He was happy with whatever I did, he assured me, bowing and backing out of the suite at the same time. His hot Latin eyes raked me from stem to stern as he did so, telling me that if I went *au naturelle*, that was okay with him, too.

I put tanning makeup on that gave my skin a dusky look and donned a black wig with a slinky black satin cocktail dress. I looked about as much like the normal Eve Drum as I looked like a Sunday School teacher.

Ramon didn't know me when I opened the door to his knock at two minutes to eight that night. His jaw fell open; his eyes bulged. He thought he had the wrong room.

I giggled when he did a double-take at the door numer-

al. "If I can fool you, I guess I can fool my cousin. I'm ready. Let's go."

Ramon drove a small Volkswagen quite expertly.

Buenos Aires is the fourth largest city in the world, with a population of over six million people. Traffic is a problem, but the street system simplifies much of the steady movement of cars back and forth. The streets pointing inland from the River Platte run east and west; those avenues parallel to the water go north and south. The *Plaza del Mayo*, that contains the old cathedral and the Pink House, is the central point of the city from which three great avenues radiate like spokes from the wheel: the *Avenida de Mayo*, the *el Diagonal Notre*, and the *Avenida Julio A. Roca*.

We went by way of the *Avenida Libertador General San Martin* past the United States Embassy building into a section of expensive apartment houses. Ramon maneuvered his compact car between the small buses—*colectivos*—and the luxurious limousines of the very wealthy Argentines like a New York taxi driver. I managed to get a glimpse of the Alvear Palace Hotel and the world-renowned cemetery known as *La Recoleta*.

In half an hour, Ramon was braking in front of the *Liberdade* apartment house. I slithered out and went into the ornate lobby of tinted glass and marble. The uniformed doorman bowed, informing me that the suite of Veronica Ozaca was to be found on the third floor.

I took the elevator.

I did not knock. I selected a thin blued-steel lock pick and let myself in, very cautiously. The apartment was quiet. I moved into the large hall just as the telephone rang.

Footsteps sounded. I drew back, saw a clothes closet and slid into it, leaving the door slightly ajar.

"Hello? Oh, Veronica darling—yes."

I knew the voice. It was Paolo Uffenti speaking.

"Tonight? But we only just got . . ."

There was a silence. Veronica Ozaca was giving orders.

"Well, if you say so, of course. I'm to meet you there just before midnight. All right. I'll bring the things we'll need. Yes, they're ready in the satchel . . . I told you I'd attend to it . . . all right."

I opened the closet door and closed it silently. I tiptoed out into the hall. I wanted to get downstairs before Palo Uffenti.

I blessed my decision to hire Ramon Garay and his Volkswagen. We would have to follow Paolo until he met up with his mistress. I went down in the elevator, gave the uniformed doorman a nod, telling him nobody had answered my ring. I felt confident Paolo wouldn't stop to chat with him when he was off on an errand that sounded suspiciously illegal over the phone.

I clued Ramon in as to what to expect.

We waited ten minutes. Paolo Uffenti, carrying a light valise, came out onto the sidewalk and walked directly to an *IKA Cordoba* parked at the curb. He did not glance around; there was no reason for him to be suspicious.

The Vokeswagen trailed the *Cordoba* at a slow crawl.

Ramon said, after a while, "Where's he going? There's nothing out this way but *La Recoletta*."

"*La Recoletta*? The Recollection?"

"The cemetery, maybe the best known one in the world." His face was sober, as he turned it in my direction for a brief glance. "It's all marble and concrete. I think it's the only cemetery in the world that hasn't a single blade of grass in it."

What did Veronica Ozaca want in a cemetery?

"Tell me more," I urged Ramon.

"Well, it's like a who's who of Buenos Aires. It's filled with mausoleums and marble tombs that boast the most famous names in Argentinian history. You have to be very rich to be buried in *La Recoletta*. Or very famous. It isn't for the likes of you and me."

The light was beginning to dawn.

"These mausoleums. Would they have reliquaries in them? Crucifixes? Maybe even chalices?"

"They would and do. I saw a mausoleum opened once; it belonged to the family of the man for whom I worked. *Ay di mil!* You should have seen that interior. Mahogany screens, carved with biblical scenes. A huge crucifix set with diamonds. Jesu! What it must have cost. What its value must be today! It was put into the mausoleum back in 1834 by the family founder, rich old hidalgo Juan Pirovana, who owned almost half the Argentine beef lands. I'll bet it would bring a million dollars today, at least."

I sighed. I know now where the trio of ex-Nazis were getting the money to finance the no-Nazi movement—or a large part of it. They were looting these old tombs for the priceless treasures inside them.

I said something of this to Ramon. He was horrified. To him, *La Recoletta* was like a Church, and nobody stole from the Church.

"It cannot be," he stated firmly.

"Want to bet?"

His dark eyes stared straight ahead. His lips thinned; he growled. "I shall inform the police. They will stop it."

"Why don't we stop it, Ramon?"

He made a gurgling sound in his throat. "What can we do?"

I opened my handbag, displayed my Belgian Bulldog. His eyes got very big. He gulped twice and nodded.

"I see what you mean. You are not the ordinary *tourista*; you are a girl detective. Or a girl spy."

"Fighting the Nazis, who want to bring somebody like Hitler back to power in Germany."

I had to gamble, telling him that. Fortunately, he was on my side, the sacrilegious enormity of what Veronica Ozaca planned to do driving every other consideration out of his head.

"Tell you what," I went on. "We'll slip into the cemetery after my quarry. If we see them starting to loot a mausoleum, you go for the police. Fair enough?"

"What about you?"

I muttered grimly, "I'm going to make sure they don't get away. Oh, and Ramon—if you should find them dead when you get back with the police, you won't be too surprised. I—er—have to kill in my job, sometimes."

I lifted my wallet, began to take money out. His hand stopped me. "Not for this, Miss Drum. This is a matter that involves the Church. I could not take money for that."

My eyes went over his handsome profile. "I won't argue about money, not at a time like this. But if we get separated, Ramon—come visit me in my hotel room after the police have taken care of the bodies. We will discuss your payment then."

He flushed slightly. I knew what he was thinking.

The *Cordoba* slowed. Paolo Uffenti was turning into the curb beside the great wall that surrounded the cemetery.

"Go on past him. Then swing around and come back. That way, we won't arouse any suspicion."

He did as I suggested. We wound up parking fifty yards from the *Cordoba*. Paolo Uffenti was nowhere in sight.

But Veronica Ozaca was. A car slipped into the space

behind the *Cordoba*, and I got a glimpse of shapely stockinged legs as she slid out. She stood a moment on the sidewalk, staring at the Volkswagen. A big man, thick across the shoulders, came out from behind the driver's seat to join her. She spoke to him. They started walking toward us. The man had a hand under the left shoulder of his coat.

"They've spotted us," Ramon panted.

He was seeing himself lying dead in his car beside his equally dead employer, me. I nestled against him, putting my left arm about his neck.

"Kiss me, you idiot," I hissed. "They'll think we're just lovers snatching a stolen moment."

He was moving my way before I finished. As a matter of fact, his open mouth swallowed my last two words. His tongue was a stopper between my teeth, preventing further speech. His hand was on my right thigh, stroking up and down outside my dress.

His mouth was sweet, tinted by the wine he'd had for dinner and by the cigarettes he had been smoking. A male mouth, that knew its way around a kiss.

He bent me back, so his head blocked the view of any passerby. His hand was on my right knee, sliding under my skirt. I let my stockinged thighs fall open.

Hell, if we were going to put on a show, we might as well make it a convincing one. His palm slipped up my inner thigh, past the stocking vamp, onto soft bare flesh. I wriggled a little, my thighs spread wider. The skirt of my black satin cocktail gown was up around my garterclasps.

I heard the footsteps coming nearer, as I threw myself into the kiss and the caress Ramon was giving me. His fingers were burning hot on my upper thighs, moving back and forth, settling into my golden fur. I moaned a

little, partly for effect, partly because I was feeling no pain.

The footsteps slowed. The car window on my side was open about three inches; I could hear very well, so I assumed Veronica Ozaca could do the same.

"Oh, darling. Darling!" I panted, catching his wrist and bringing his hand tighter against me. "You make me feel so weak. So weak!"

I was murmuring against his lips to disguise my voice. The Argentine woman could see my black-haired wig; the shadows were too dark to permit her to see my blond pubic hair, and besides, Ramon was covering it with his hand.

The footsteps went on slowly.

I reached between us, blindly seeking his loins to urge him on to a bigger and better performance. I caught him firmly, gasped a little at his size. I heard him groan and felt him bury his mouth against my neck.

His fingers were red coals on my female flesh. My hips quivered, jerking slightly. The top of his head hid my face, but out of the corners of my eyes, I saw a man and woman pass by, retracing their steps toward their parked car.

"Easy," I whispered. "They've gone past."

"*He perdido los estribos*," he panted. "I got a little carried away with—with what we were doing."

"Yeah, me too," I admitted, wriggling out from under and taking my hand away. My skirt was up to my girlhood; I was showing off my legs in the black nylons with the garterstraps of my belt bisecting my pale thighs.

Ramon ate his heart out, staring as I slid around and lifted my behind to get my skirt down. He murmured, "*Deslumbrante!* You dazzle me, darling."

I smiled, happy that my sex appeal was still with me.

"We aren't going to stop there?" he all but sobbed, reaching for me again. I fought him off, but gently.

"Honey, not now. I have a job to do. So do you. We've got to get into the cemetery."

He drew away, his mouth smudged with my Estee Lauder lipstick. His shoulders lifted in a philosophic shrug.

A moment before, I'd glimpsed Veronica Ozaca and her male companion making their way into the shadows near the iron grille fence. I pushed Ramon away and put my face to the car door window. Yes, there they were, hurrying between the tombs.

Paolo Uffenti would be waiting for them, somewhere in *La Recoletta*. Where they went, I was going to go too.

I opened the car door. "Come on, Ramon!"

We ran for the shadows where Veronica Ozaca and her friend had somehow gotten into the cemetery. I knew there was no gate there, but I knew damn well they hadn't climbed over the grillework fence.

I slid to a stop, my hands going out to feel the iron bars. Here! There was a tiny hinge and a catch. A small postern-like gate, set in the fence itself. I wondered, as I pushed it open, if the ex-Nazis had somehow contrived to install it. Of course, it might be for use of the handyman who kept the mausoleums in repair.

I slipped through, closely followed by my guide. He put a hand on my arm, halting my forward progress so he could press his distended manhood into my soft buttocks. I wriggled back against him, then pushed hard.

"Save it, lover. We haven't time," I snapped.

"But I'm dying," he protested. "*Quedate quieta*. Don't move. Let me just feel you like . . ."

I needed a hot-blooded Latin like I needed the proverbial hole in the head, at the moment. But I couldn't tell

him to get lost. He might come in handy to summon the police.

"Later, damn it!" I rasped.

I kicked off my granny oxfords, telling him to get rid of his shoes too so we wouldn't make any noise. Then we ran like silent shadows along the path.

The night was quiet. Overhead, the winter moon shed its pale light. The tombs and mausoleums seemed to glow with that silver radiance on their bulk. Cemeteries are notoriously quiet places at night; *La Recoletta* was no exception. There wasn't even a bush to rub its leaves together in the wind.

We ran, until I heard a metallic sound.

I slid to a stop in my stockinged feet, reaching out to grab Ramon. He was all for the idea; he grabbed me and held me tight against him. He was still excited, I found.

"Oh! *Tu ve vas*," I giggled. "But not right now. Come on, Ramon—break it off. I have a job to do."

I fumbled in my Coblenz, drawing out my gun.

Ramon let me go, as if I'd turned into a stick of dynamite. I whispered, "It isn't for you, silly. You're on my side."

"*Si, si*. On your side, senorita," he breathed, reaching for me again. I had to run to get from him.

We came out from behind a mausoleum that resembled a small cathedral, when I caught sight of a bronze door closing about fifty feet away. They were inside, rifling a tomb. I ran closer as a flashlight sprang to life, gesturing for Ramon to put his hands against the tomb wall and bend over so I could stand on his back.

With my feet planted on either side of his spine, I let my eyes creep above the rim of a recessed window that had bronze bars across its glass. I was staring down into a

wide space filled with half a dozen coffins and three people.

They were moving about very efficiently. Veronica Ozaca was lifting down a golden chalice that was edged with what seemed to be emeralds in the pale flashlight beam. Paolo Uffenti was handling a crucifix that blazed with the diamonds encrusted in its crosswork. The man with them was standing on widespread legs, slowly removing an apparently solid gold chain from its twelve metal posts.

Veronica Ozaca raised the chalice as might a priest while saying Mass, but her intent was anything but religious. She was assaying the golden, jewel-crowned cup for its possible worth. The greed was there to see on her excited face.

Her eyes rose upward suddenly, staring right at me.

Chapter 9

I froze into position, not daring to move. Sometimes the eyes play tricks. Veronica Ozaca might be looking right at me, yet not see me. But if I should move, that movement would register on her retinas. So I stayed as quiet as a terrified mouse.

She must have been dreaming about how rich the chalice could make her, because she lowered her eyes to it without changing her expression. I could have been back in Naples for all the attention she paid me.

When it was safe, I wriggled my toes, and as Ramon bent down, I dropped to the ground. My hand drew my Belgian Bulldog from my handbag.

"Go get the police," I whispered.

Ramon looked reluctant. "I don't want to leave you alone with those robbers!"

"Honey, I can take care of myself, believe me. You'd only be in the way."

He scowled. "I thought that you and I . . . what I am trying to say is, that after our kiss in the car . . ."

I grinned. These Latin lovers are really something. It's all they can think about. I reached down and patted his impatient flesh.

"I'll see you later, Ramon. I mean it, just go get the cops now like a good boy."

I guess he read my promise in my face, because he nodded, whirled on a heel and ran. My job was just about over. As soon as the police arrived, I could turn Veronica Ozaca, Paolo Uffenti and their muscleman over to them. They would be booked for murder, extradited back to Naples, and their financial setup with the neo-Nazis would collapse.

I leaned my shoulder against the marble wall of the mausoleum. Its coldness was just getting to me when Paolo Uffenti came out of the tomb, carrying the crucifix and the chalice Veronica Ozaca had been admiring. Even in the moonlight, those jewels looked great.

I straightened. I couldn't let Paolo walk off with those reliquaries. As he set off down the flagstoned footpath, I slipped behind a couple of nearby canotaphs and followed him. He walked at a fast pace, so I jogged along until I felt sure we were out of earshot of the Pirovana vault.

My stockinged feet made no sound as I launched myself through the night air. The short Bulldog barrel made an arc in the night as I whipped it around.

Somehow, I must have betrayed my presence, because Paolo whirled, half lifting the crucifix in his right hand. The gun missed its target—his temple—and thudded into his ear.

The blow hurt him. I heard his grunt of pain, but he was not knocked out. He said, "*You!*" like I was a ghost.

At the same time, he hit me with the chalice across my left breast. Wow! My girlish attachments are very sensitive. What girl's aren't? I bit down on my lip so as not to screech and alert the other grave-robbers.

Instead, I brought my knee up hard, right where his own male attachments were hung. So us secret agents

fight dirty. We also fight to stay alive, and I didn't want Veronica Ozaca and the big brute with her to get me between the three of them.

Paolo Uffenti doubled up, dropping the chalice and the crucifix. I chopped down at the back of his neck with the edge of my left hand. It was not a strong blow; it was tangential and lacked authority. All it did was cause my quarry to fall forward with his face against my upper thigh.

Then he bit me, fastening his teeth into my soft flesh high up near my girlhood. His fangs sank deep, and I screamed.

My vocal chords hadn't stopped vibrating before I had his long hair in my left fist, yanking him back and away, at the same time bringing the Bulldog barrel down across his face.

Paolo grunted. His eyes bulged.

I whipped the pistol back and forth, whacking his temples until they were bloody. Behind me I heard a voice calling out.

Veronica Ozaca and her big friend would be making it a threesome at any moment. Those odds were too rich for little old me. I brought the Bulldog up under his chin. There was a sodden thunk and Paolo Uffenti fell sideways into a nearby mausoleum wall.

A gun blasted the cemetery air.

I heard the bullet whine past my head.

I whirled and fired the Belgian revolver, not aiming, just wanting to let them know that I could sling a little lead around too. There was a sudden silence as the echoes of my shot died away.

There was no sense in crouching here, making my bod a target for their bullets. I dropped flat and crawled along the cement toward the protection of a big tomb. I realized

my quarry might do what I'd done, kick off their shoes and tiptoe around on the hard cement, so I wouldn't be able to hear them.

My blonde head poked around the corner of the mausoleum. I could see nothing but marble and cement. As far as my senses could tell me, I was the only living thing in *La Recoleta*.

Time was on my side. I could just wait it out until the police arrived, but I was too impatient for any such calm caper. Besides, for all I knew, they might be hot-footing it out of the cemetery the other way.

I slithered forward. The cement was damn hard on my thighs and belly, to say nothing of my knocked knocker, where Paolo had belted me with the chalice. I swore between gritted teeth that nobody was going to escape me this night.

The moon was bright overhead, blazing down in silver refulgence on the tombs and mausoleums that stood as silent as the graves they were. A soft wind had come up, drying my sweaty forehead.

This far south of the equator, the seasons are turned around. It was winter in Buenos Aires, even though it was late June. Luckily, the day had been mild and the night very comfortable. So it was not the wind that sent a ripple down my spine.

My female intuition was making like a leprechaun, shrilling out my death notice. My neck creased every which way, as I swung my head to left and right. Nobody. Then why was I so goose-bumpy? Something was wrong with my situation.

I lifted my face to see the moon. As I did so, what looked like a dark cloud came between Luna and me. Only it was no cloud. It was the big man with Veronica Ozaca.

He had climbed up on a mausoleum, sighted me, and had leaped from one big vault to another. No wonder I hadn't caught sight of him.

But I felt him. He landed on me with bent knees, all two hundred-plus pounds of him. If I hadn't lifted my face to glance at the moon, those knees would have taken me flush in the back and snapped my spine.

As it was, I just managed a half turn, so he hit my right hip. I thought he'd broken it for a second, even while I got my Belgian Bulldog up between us.

His hand flailed between our bellies, slamming into the gun and knocking it out from between us, just as I squeezed off a shot. The noise was deafening. If he'd been the slightest bit slower, I'd have gotten him with a .32 pellet.

I tried to throw him off. No go.

His beefy face was grinning down at me. I guess he liked the feel of my hip trapped between his massive thighs. My feet could kick, but my awkward position on my left hipbone kept me from moving any more of me than that.

The flat of his calloused palm caught me alongside the face. I thought he'd torn my head off for a moment. He banged it sideways into the cement pavement and then back again the other way on his backswing.

Very much more of this treatment and I'd be a dead doll. I was pinned down; I'd lost my gun; I couldn't squirm out from under. So I did the only thing I could do.

I made the V for victory sign with the forefinger and middle finger on my right hand and drove it up toward the face that hung just above me. His grin was slicing his face. His pig eyes were bright with cruelty.

My fingertips went past his nose and into his eyes.

"Aaaaagghhhh!"

His body bucked backwards, his hands flew up.

He was off balance. I heaved upward, dislodging him from his kneeling position. He went backwards, legs bent under him. I grabbed his shirt collar with both hands and rode his falling body to the cement.

I tightened my fingers on his collar, on either side of his bull neck. I lifted his head and drove it cracking-loud against the cement pavement. I did it again. And again. And again.

I guess I was just mad or half insane from pain. I didn't give Veronica Ozaca a thought.

I only remembered her when her shot nicked my behind. Honest to God, it seared a furrow across my cheeks that felt like a redhot branding iron. I catapulted off the unconscious muscleman, right hand stabbing for the Bulldog about ten feet away, where the muscleman's big hand had knocked it when he drove it out of my hand.

A bullet bounced on the pavement to one side of my left knee. I was scrambling forward—oh, my poor stockings!—on that damn cement, when he-she fired again. My rump was up, and I thought Veronica Ozaca was using it as a target, but he-she missed.

My right hand went around my pearl-handled revolver.

I flopped belly down and lifted the Bulldog. Only the tombs looked back at me. Suddenly, I grew aware that I was sobbing softly. Well, hell! Why not, after what I'd put my body through? I wanted to reach around behind me and feel how badly my buttocks had been hurt. They felt as if half of them had been shot away.

A shadow moved in back of a tomb thirty yards away.

I forgot about my bruised behind.

My right hand lifted the Bulldog. My left hand was out there pointing in the quick-firing, snap-off-a-shot tech-

nique. The shadow went away, and I saw a pale face under a mop of red hair.

The Bulldog barked.

Lead splinters hit and ricocheted in all directions an inch from that face. I heard Veronica Ozaca cry out.

Getting to my feet, I ran for the nearest mausoleum. With its bulk in front of me, I felt a little more secure. The only trouble was, if I stuck my head out, Wolfgang Oehler-Veronica Ozaca might put a bullet in it.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

I stuck my head out right alongside the Bulldog gun. Veronica Ozaca was nowhere in sight. I moved out from behind the tomb, advancing at a run.

Too late, I caught movement out of the corner of my eye. I never bothered to look; I just dove forward for the ground, turning in mid-air to snap off a shot.

I landed on my shoulder, bounced once, and tried to steady my aim. Veronica Ozaca was standing to one side of a big cenotaph, both hands gripping an automatic, aiming along its barrel.

She must have decided to risk everything on one bullet. She made a big bullseye in the moonlight. My right forefinger curled around the trigger. I was just about to squeeze off my shot when the man-woman lurched sideways.

My jaw fell open.

She was staggering sideways in a curious crablike motion. I could make out a dark something on her chest. It took a few seconds for me to realize it was a bullet wound.

The wild shot I'd gotten off while flying through the air had thudded home, right on target. Veronica Ozaca had been standing there all but dead, while I'd been bouncing around on the cement.

Very cautiously, my Bulldog pointed right at her, I made it to my feet. He-she was still staggering; his-her will to live was keeping him-her upright. I came closer.

Veronica Ozaca opened her eyes. There was a film over them, the death-film, but the hate behind it was cold and livid.

"Damn you," she breathed between clenched teeth. "We were so close to . . . getting what we wanted. So close. . . ."

Her knees bent. Her body had grown too heavy for her weakened muscles to support its weight. Her knees hit the cement first, then she tilted forward, head bent as if it too were too heavy for the neck to support.

She fell forehead-down on the cemetery pavings and never moved again. I stood there with the Belgian Bulldog heavy in my hand and felt hot tears stinging my eyes. I was not weeping for Veronica Ozaca. My behind was just about killing me.

I was still standing there when I heard the police whistles. If Ramon Garay hadn't come racing up with them to put his arm about me, I think I'd have fallen down to lie beside the man-woman I had just killed.

"Poor darling, poor dear sweetheart," breathed Ramon, kissing my scratched forehead where I'd scraped it on the cemetery cement.

It felt good to lean into his young strength, while the police asked me questions. I told them I was from L.U.S.T. I produced my identification cards, explaining about the three ex-Nazis I'd been tracking down.

They sympathized over my appearance. My cheeks were swollen from the blows the muscleman had given them; my forehead was scratched and bleeding; my inner thigh was sore and bleeding where Paolo Uffenti had bitten me, and my left breast ached from the blow he'd

given it with the jeweled chalice. My behind felt worst of all.

I guess I looked hung over, because they told me I could give them the details tomorrow at police headquarters. Ramon led me at a slow walk back toward the side gate.

He was very tender, assisting me into the Volkswagen. His face mirrored his concern at my condition.

I figured he was sorry about our date which I'd be unable to keep now. So I was surprised when he murmured, while turning the ignition key in its lock, "I will come to your apartment and put you to bed. Alone. You won't be in the mood for love."

"You're very understanding, Ramon. And I'm grateful." I smiled. "Maybe a couple of days from now, if I can stay on . . ."

I let my voice trail off. I was the lady from L.U.S.T., and while I was down here in Buenos Aires, I might have another job already waiting for me back in the States. The back of my head rested against the seat. I closed my eyes and let nature take over.

All the way back to the Plaza I slept like a baby. When Ramon braked the car, my eyelids lifted. I murmured against being disturbed and snuggled deeper into the car seat.

"We'll go in the servants' entrance," he whispered, hooking a forearm under my stockinged knees and swinging them sideways and through the open door.

His left arm went about my middle as he assisted me to my feet. I let my weight lean on him, let my feet be guided across the sidewalk. In two minutes we were in the service elevator.

Then Ramon was helping me down the hall, pausing to

open my handbag and extract my key. The door opened. His hand switched on the electric lights.

He lifted me in his arms and carried me across the rug toward the bedroom door. A dim radiance filled the room, as another switch clicked.

Setting me down on my feet, he turned me around and eased me down on the bed, face first. I heard his soft gasp of sympathy at the sight of my bullet-shredded dress. Gentle fingers went to my feet, slipped off my Capezio pumps.

Male hands slid under my mini-skirt to fasten on garterclasps and undo them. He slid down my ruined stockings, pausing to press his lips into the soft hollows at the backs of my knees. I was almost asleep again, head pillowed on my forearms. It was nice to be waited on like this by a handsome young man. Every girl should have one as attentive.

He raised my mini-skirt.

"It isn't too bad," he murmured.

"Veronica Ozaca shot away half my behind," I murmured drowsily. "Is there anything left of it?"

His soft laughter was reassuring. Even more auspicious was the fact that he was kissing my white buttocks very tenderly.

"You see? There's no need to worry. You've only been barely scratched. I'll kiss it and make it well."

His kisses on my bare buttocks seemed to help at that. I wriggled a little. His lips were soft and moist; his tongue was a wet warmth going over my flesh.

"Am I bleeding there?"

"Certainly not," he murmured. "It's just a faint scratch. Your wound was mostly in your mind. I'll give you a warm bath, and you'll be as good as ever."

"I don't believe you, Ramon. You're just being a gentleman, lying to make me feel better."

He said nothing. His feathery hands undid my garter-belt and slipped it out from under me. He kissed my hip. He put his hands to my dress zipper and tugged it down. The dress came off over my head.

Ramon was kneeling near my face, when he got the sheath off. He was up real close, so I could see that his attentions to my buttocks had affected him more than somewhat. I put my hand on him, gently.

"Poor Ramon," I breathed. "He needs his loving so much, and there isn't a damn thing I can do."

"Forget me," he smiled. "You're the one who needs attention. Now up. Up!"

His hands slid under my armpits and hoisted me to my knees. He was standing beside the bed, smiling down at me, so all I had to do was let his aroused manhood know the softness of my breasts. I giggled, inched closer. My naked breasts began getting as hard as he was.

His handsome young face reflected his tension. His eyes became glassy; his mouth opened so he could breathe a little easier. Against his short buttons, I whispered, "What about that bath, Ramon? Are you going to wait on me in there too?"

"I'd have to get undressed," he grated.

My fingers went to his shirt buttons. In a few minutes I had him naked to his belt. He had a solid chest, almost hairless. I fumbled with the belt buckle and ran his zipper down.

Thumbs hooked into his trouser tops and his shorts. I yanked downward. Ramon Garay was quite a man, even better than Paolo Uffenti. I knelt there, staring at him.

It suddenly occurred to me that, throughout this adventure of mine, I'd been running rings around the venerary

bush without really winning any prizes for pussycat pleasure. Outside of Luisa Geraci and that unsatisfactory time in the sandolino with Paolo Uffenti, I'd been quite circumspect. For me, that is.

So I felt perfectly justified in moving forward on my knees, in throwing my bare arms about Ramon's bare hips, and feeling him nestle between my breasts. Oddly, I did not hurt there any more. Maybe I was too busy feeling pleasure to mind the aches.

I held him like that for long moments, then put a foot on the rug. "We'll take a shower together," I told him. "I don't think I could go a long bath right now."

His delighted grin assured me he was feeling the same way. As I turned my back, he reached around and caught my breasts in his palms. He was up tight against my buttocks, and they loved it. I even wiggled them a little to tell him he was right, it was only a scratch down there.

His hips bumped forward, and we walked like that into the bathroom, where Ramon turned on the water, stuck his hand under it to make sure its temperature was hot enough but not too hot, and then helped me into the glass cabinet.

His hands lathered up soap, then used the Camay all over my female flesh. The warm water and the slick soap were like medicine to my bruised flesh. The ache was gone from my cheeks, from my behind and from my left breast.

Only my inner thigh, where Paolo Uffenti had sunk his teeth, still bothered me. When Ramon saw how I winced as he washed me there, he became apologetic.

"Let me see," he murmured, kneeling.

I widened my thighs, lifting my left leg. His mouth was very gentle, very tender with my bruised flesh. His tongue sent ripples of rapture up and down my spine. He was a

wanderer, that boy. He never really stayed in any one spot. He was moving this way and that, finally centering his attention, as I gasped and let my hips shudder.

I forgot about the bruise. I started taking off.

And the damn telephone had to ring!

I ignored it, but Ramon said it might be important, so I put the Drum torso in a towel and padded barefoot to the telephone. Ramon padded after me minus a Cannon, so while I was going through the hello bit, he was up tight and kissing my bare shoulders.

"Eve?" said the phone.

"David! However are you? Ooooooh!"

"Eve? I seem to get an echo."

"Yes—well, could be. I've just stepped out of a shower, and it's chi-chi-chilly ou-out here." Ramon was kissing down my spine.

"Wanted to know how everything's going."

"Great. Mission accomplished and all that secret agent slang. All three objectives have been written off. One in Israel, the other two in their graves."

"Eve, about your next case . . ."

"Ooooooh!"

Ramon was back at my backside. He was a real cluni-centric, all right, but he had a way about him.

"Eve? You sound funny. What's the action down there?"

"Down there? How did you—oh! Well, I am a little chilly, David. Tired, too. So if that's all you have to say . . ."

My boy was moving around on his knees, kissing me as he went. I shivered as if I really were chilly. The towel was slipping badly. As a matter of fact, it was slipping around my ankles, and there I was, ripe for kisses.

"Eve, have you got a man with you?"

I stared downward. Ramon was a man, without question. I even felt to make sure. Quite happily I told the phone, "You might say that, David dear. In fact, if he was any more manly, I'd be terrified."

David muttered something unintelligible.

"Was that good-bye, David?"

"All right, all right. I'll say it. But be on the first plane out of Buenos Aires tomorrow morning. The General wants to send you to Mexico. And this time I'm going with you."

"Mmmmm, that's nice," I gurgled.

It was nice, Ramon kneeling there and me sitting on the edge of the telephone table, patting his head. There is a word that covers what was happening to me. *Eunoterpsia*, which is derived from *eune*, a bed, and *terpsis*, enjoyment. It means that fleshly pleasures are the only things worthwhile in life, and I am a firm believer. Honest Injun.

So I went on eunoterpsizing, while David fumed at the other end of the line. I was getting talked to in a couple of different locations, but Ramon was the only one I was tuned in on. After a time, David gave up.

"Remember, first flight out."

Yeah, hey. Like I'm going to listen to what David Anderjanian says at a time like this. I hadn't even had my first flight in, yet.

"Sure, David," I said happily, and hung up.

Then I took the receiver off the hook in case he should decide to call back, just to annoy me. I had things to do tonight, and I wanted no interruptions. I slid downward as Ramon rose up. We made contact. Ramon went on rising, carrying me along with him.

I locked my arms about his neck; he supported me

with his palms under my buttocks. He started walking toward the bed. It was nice to be a pussycat passenger after all my recent activity.

Real nice.

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4. *Kill some people.*
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What's it all about?

Well, at these swinging orgies, a nefarious nest of nasty neo-Nazis come nuzzling up to our nude nymphet. They're all out of uniform, of course, and thus difficult to spot, but when does a lady spy ever have it soft?

Anyway, these hardened badmen are plotting to take over the world again, and Oh Oh Sex has to take them over with her body first.

And kill them.

Dead!